

Volume II

# Saints of The Church

*From The Time of Christ Until Saint Constantine The Great*



*Lives of Seventy Saints by St. Nikolai of Zhicha Arranged Chronologically  
Copywork Made From The Hymns of The Orthodox Church*

Zaner Bloser  
Manuscript



# *Saints of The Church*

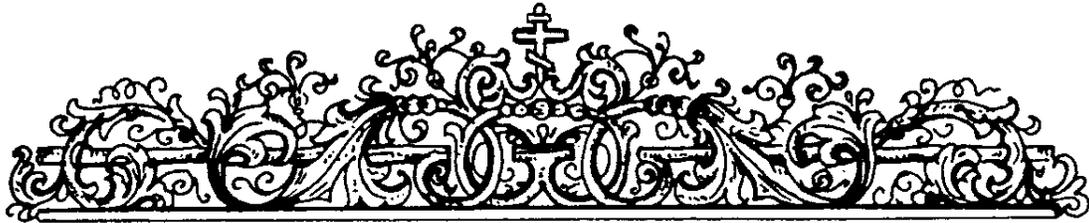
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*Paidea Classics*



Lives of saints from the “*Prologue of Obrid*,” by St. Nikolai Velimirovic

is used with the blessing of His Grace

+Longin

Bishop of the Western American Diocese of the Serbian Orthodox

Church

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*“Pray that you may be granted the grace to read the Fathers with the right understanding, the grace to live up to the standards they put before you, and the grace to clearly see your own frailty. You will not long be left wanting and waiting. God will give you help.”*

~ St. Macarius of Optina



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## IMPORTANT NOTE

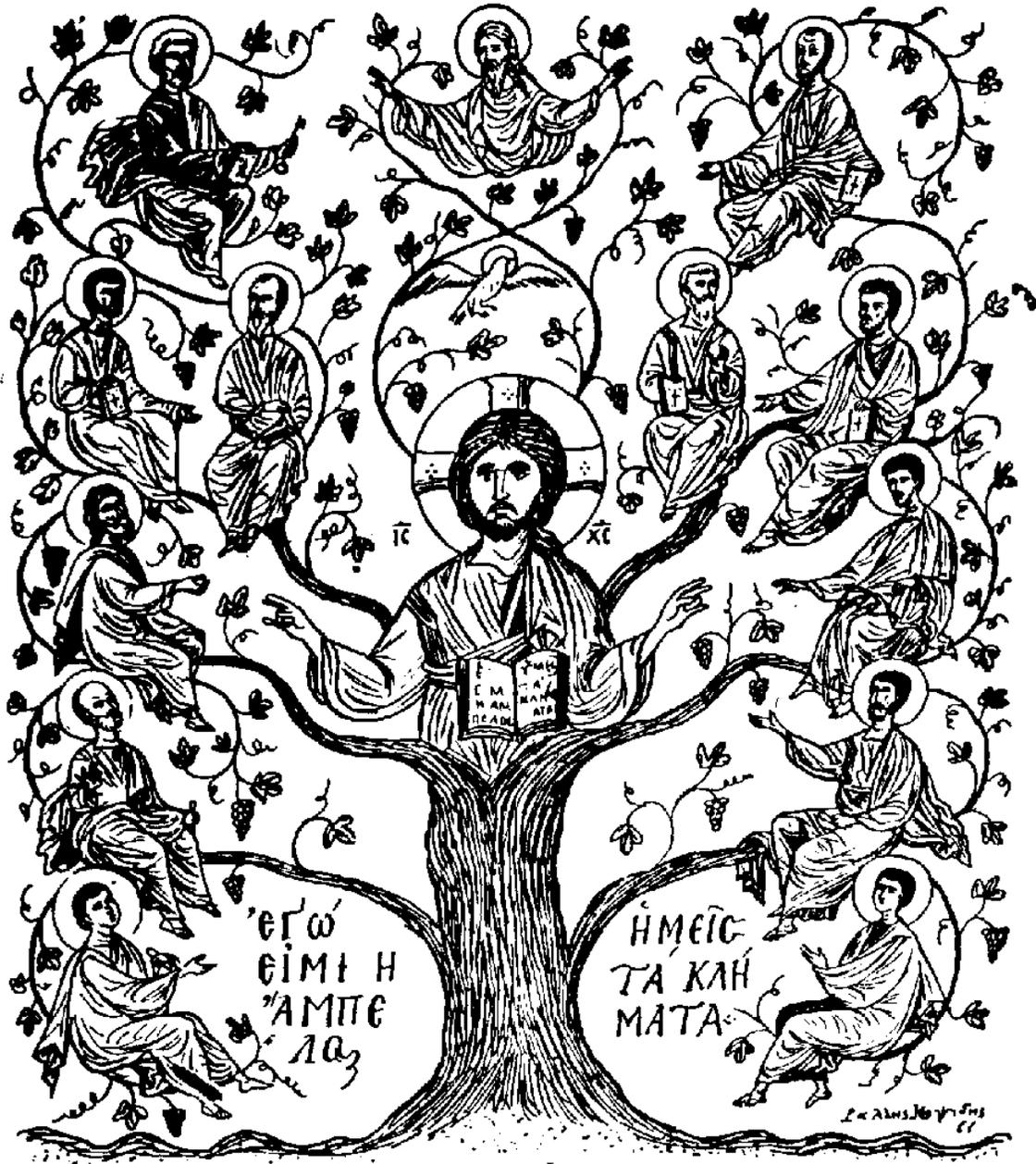
Some of the depictions of martyrdoms may be too graphic for younger or more sensitive children. Parental discretion is strongly advised.



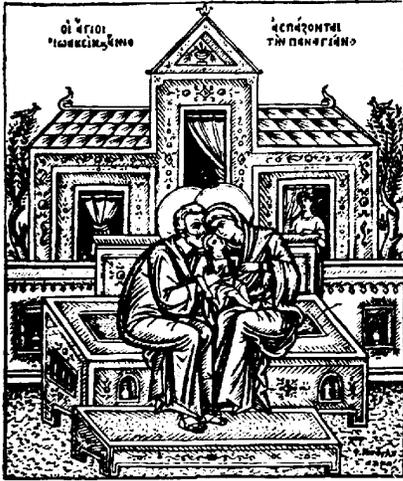


**PRAYER OF THE HOLY HIERARCH JOHN CHRYSOSTOM  
BEFORE READING OR LISTENING TO THE LIVES AND  
SAYINGS OF THE SAINTS.**

*○ Lord Jesus Christ, open Thou the eyes of my heart, that I may hear Thy word and understand and do Thy will, for I am a sojourner upon the earth. Hide not Thy commandments from me, but open mine eyes, that I may perceive the wonders of Thy law. Speak unto me the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom. On Thee do I set my hope, ○ my God, that Thou shalt enlighten my mind and understanding with the light of Thy knowledge, not only to cherish those things which are written, but to do them; that in reading the lives and sayings of the saints I may not sin, but that such may serve for my restoration, enlightenment and sanctification, for the salvation of my soul, and the inheritance of life everlasting. For Thou art the enlightenment of those who lie in darkness, and from Thee cometh every good deed and every gift. Amen.*



# The Forebears Of God, Saints Joachim And Anna September 9<sup>th</sup>



St. Joachim was of the lineage of Judah and a descendant of King David. Anna was the daughter of Matthan the priest, from the lineage of Levi, as was Aaron the high priest. Matthan had three daughters: Mary, Sophia and Anna. Mary married, lived in Bethlehem and gave birth to Salome; Sophia married, also lived in Bethlehem, and gave birth to Elizabeth, the mother of St. John the Forerunner; Anna married Joachim in Nazareth, and in old age gave birth to Mary, the Most-holy Theotokos. Joachim and Anna had lived together in marriage for fifty years, and yet had remained barren. They lived devoutly and quietly, and of all their income they spent one third on themselves,

distributed one third to the poor and gave the other third to the Temple, and they were well provided for. Once when in their old age they came to Jerusalem to offer a sacrifice to God, the high priest Issachar reprimanded Joachim, saying: "You are not worthy that a gift be accepted from your hands, for you are childless." Others, who had children, pushed Joachim behind them as one unworthy. This greatly grieved these two aged souls and they returned home in great sorrow. Then the two of them fell down before God in prayer, that He work a miracle with them as He once had with Abraham and Sarah, and give them a child as a comfort in their old age. Then God sent His angel, who announced to them the birth of "a daughter most-blessed, by whom all nations on earth will be blessed and through whom the salvation of the world will come." Anna straightway conceived, and in nine months gave birth to the Holy Virgin Mary. St. Joachim lived for eighty years and Anna lived for seventy-nine, at which time they reposed in the Lord.

THE FOREBEARS OF GOD, SAINTS JOACHIM AND ANNA

*Troparion*

We celebrate the memory

of Thy righteous

forebears and through

them we entreat Thee.

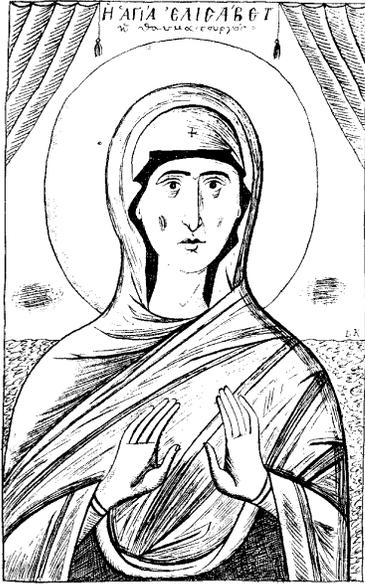
THE FOREBEARS OF GOD, SAINTS JOACHIM AND ANNA

O Lord, to save our souls.

# The Holy Prophet Zacharias

## And His Wife Elisabeth

September 5<sup>th</sup>



He was the father of St. John the Forerunner. Zacharias was the son of Barachias, from the lineage of Abia, of the sons of Aaron. Zacharias was a high priest who held the eighth degree of service in the Temple at Jerusalem. His wife Elizabeth was the daughter of Sophia and sister of St. Anna, who was the mother of the Holy Theotokos. During the reign of King Herod the child-slayer, Zacharias was serving one day at the Temple of Jerusalem according to his turn. An angel of God appeared to him in the sanctuary, and Zacharias had great fear. The angel said to him: *“Fear not, Zacharias* (Luke 1:13), and announced that Elizabeth would bear a son, in answer to their prayers. But both Zacharias and Elizabeth were old. When Zacharias doubted the words of the heavenly herald, the angel said: *“I am*

*Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God”* (Luke 1:19). Zacharias was struck dumb from that hour, and could not speak until his son was born and he had written on a tablet: *“His name is John”* (Luke 1:63). Then his speech returned, and he magnified God. Some time later, when the Lord Jesus had been born and Herod began to slaughter the children of Bethlehem, he sent men to find and kill the son of Zacharias—for Herod had heard all that had happened to Zacharias, and how John had been born. Upon seeing the soldiers coming, Elizabeth took John into her arms—he was a year and a half old at that time—fled from the house with him, and ran to a rocky and desolate place. When she saw the soldiers following her, she cried out to the mountain: *“O mountain of God, receive a mother with her child!”* and the rock opened and hid the mother and child. Then Herod, enraged that the child John had not been slain, ordered that Zacharias be slain before the altar. The blood of Zacharias was spilled on the marble and dried solid as stone, and remained as a witness to Herod’s evil deed. In the place where Elizabeth hid with John a cave opened, water flowed out of it, and a fruit-bearing palm grew, all by the power of God. Forty days after the death of Zacharias, the blessed Elizabeth died. The child John remained in the wilderness, fed by an angel and protected by God’s providence, until the day he appeared at the Jordan.

THE HOLY PROPHET ZACHARIAS AND HIS WIFE ELISABETH

*Kontakion*

On this day the prophet

and venerable priest of

the Most High, even

Zacharias, who begat

THE HOLY PROPHET ZACHARIAS AND HIS WIFE ELISABETH

the Forerunner, hath

now mixed for us the

draught of virtue

and set the table of his

THE HOLY PROPHET ZACHARIAS AND HIS WIFE ELISABETH

sacred memory.

nourishing all the

faithful; for this cause

do we extol him as a

THE HOLY PROPHET ZACHARIAS AND HIS WIFE ELISABETH

most godly initiate of

grace divine.

## Simeon, The God-Receiver

February 3<sup>rd</sup>



During the reign of the Egyptian Emperor Ptolemy Philadelphus, Simeon was chosen as one of the prominent Seventy to whom was entrusted the task of translating the Bible from the Hebrew language into the Greek language [The Septuagint]. Simeon was performing his task conscientiously but when he was translating the book of the Prophet Isaiah and came upon the prophecy: "*Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and will give birth to a son*" (Isaiah 7:14), he became confused and took a knife to remove the word "virgin" and to replace it with the words, "*young woman,*" and as such to translate it into Greek. At that moment, however, an angel of God appeared to Simeon and restrained him from his intention, explaining to him

that the prophecy is true; that the prophecy is correctly written: that it is true and correct. The messenger of God also said that Simeon would be convinced of it personally for, according to the Will of God, he will not die until he sees the Messiah born of the Virgin. The righteous Simeon rejoiced to hear such a voice from heaven, left the prophecy unchanged and thanked God Who is making him worthy to live and to see the Promised One. When the young Child Jesus was presented in the Temple in Jerusalem by the Virgin Mary, the Spirit of God appeared to Simeon who was very old and as "white as a swan." Simeon quickly entered the Temple and there recognized both the Virgin and the young Child by the light that shone around their heads as an aureal. The joyful Simeon took Christ into his hands and prayed to God to release him from this life: "*Now, Master, You may let Your servant go in peace, according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation*" (St. Luke 2: 29-30). Anna the Prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, was also there, who recognized the Messiah and proclaimed Him to the people.

"*And coming forward at that very moment, she gave thanks to God, and spoke about the Child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem*" (St. Luke 2:38). At that time, Anna was eighty-four years old. St. Simeon died shortly after that. This righteous Elder Simeon is considered to be the Protector of young children.

SAINT SYMEON, THE GOD-RECEIVER

**Kontakion**

*(For Saints Symeon And The Prophetess Anna)*

Let Symeon the Righteous

and Anna the Prophetess,

that godly pair, be praised

together; well-pleasing to

SAINT SYMEON, THE GOD-RECEIVER

God, they became

witnesses of the

Incarnate Lord.

When they saw Him as an

SAINT SYMEON, THE GOD-RECEIVER

infant, together they

worshipped Him.



EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES MARY MAGDALENE

*Troparion*

When Christ God had

been born for our sakes

from the Virgin, thou

faithfully didst follow Him.

EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES MARY MAGDALENE

keeping His statutes and

heeding His sacred laws,

O august Mary

Magdalene. Hence, as we

EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES MARY MAGDALENE

Today observe thy holy

remembrance, we receive

the loosing of our sins and

transgressions through

EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES MARY MAGDALENE

thy holy prayers for us.

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# The Holy Martyr Photina

## The Samaritan Woman At The Well

March 20<sup>th</sup>



This was the Samaritan woman who had the rare fortune to converse with the Lord Christ Himself at the Well of Jacob, near Sychar (St. John 4:4-31). Believing in the Lord, Photina afterwards went to preach His Gospel with Victor and Josiah her two sons, and with her five sisters, Anatolia, Phota, Photida, Parasceve and Cyriaca. They had gone to Carthage in Africa. There they were arrested and taken to Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero and were thrown into prison. By God's Divine Providence, Domnina, the daughter of Nero, came into contact with St. Photina and was converted to the Faith of Christ by her. After imprisonment they all suffered for the sake of Christ. Photina, who for the first time was enlightened with the light of truth at the

well of Sychar, was now thrown into a well where she died and entered into the eternal kingdom of Christ.

THE HOLY MARTYR PHOTINA - THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

*Troparion*

All illumined by the Holy

Spirit, thou didst drink

with great and ardent

longing of the waters

THE HOLY MARTYR PHOTINA - THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

Christ Saviour gave

unto thee; and with the

streams of salvation

was thou refreshed.

THE HOLY MARTYR PHOTINA - THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

which thou abundantly

gavest to those at thirst.

O Great Martyr and

true peer of the

THE HOLY MARTYR PHOTINA - THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

Apostles, Photina,

entreat Christ God to

grant great mercy

unto us.

# The Holy Martyr Longinus, The Centurion

October 16th



The divine Matthew the Evangelist, in describing the Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ, says: *‘Now when the centurion and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that were done, they feared greatly, saying: “Truly this was the Son of God”’* (Matthew 27:54). That centurion was this blessed Longinus, who with two other of his soldiers came to believe in Jesus, the Son of God. Longinus was chief of the soldiers who were present at the Crucifixion of the Lord on Golgotha, and was also the chief of the watch that guarded the tomb. When the Jewish elders learned of the Resurrection of Christ, they bribed the soldiers to spread the false news that Christ did not resurrect, but rather that His disciples stole His body. The Jews also tried to bribe Longinus, but he did not allow himself to be bribed. Then the

Jews resorted to their usual strategy: they decided to kill Longinus. Learning of this, Longinus removed his military belt, was baptized with his two companions by an apostle, secretly left Jerusalem and moved to Cappadocia with his companions. There, he devoted himself to fasting and prayer and, as a living witness of Christ’s Resurrection, converted many pagans to the true Faith by his witness. After that, he withdrew to a village on the estate of his father. Even there, however, the malice of the Jews did not leave him in peace. Due to the calumnies of the Jews, Pilate dispatched soldiers to behead Longinus. St. Longinus stood up to pray, and prayed all night long, preparing himself for death. In the morning, he called his two companions to him, clothed himself in white burial clothes, and instructed the other members of his household to bury him on a particular small hill. He then went to the soldiers and told them that he was that Longinus whom they were seeking. The soldiers were perplexed and ashamed, and could not even contemplate beheading Longinus, but he insisted that they fulfill the order of their superior. Thus, Longinus and his two companions were beheaded. The soldiers took Longinus’ head to Pilate, and he turned it over to the Jews. They threw it on a dung heap outside the city.

THE HOLY MARTYR LONGINUS, THE CENTURION

*Kontakion*

With great joy the

Church of Christ today

rejoiceth on the festive

memory of blest

THE HOLY MARTYR LONGINUS, THE CENTURION

Longinus, the all-famed

and godly prizewinner.

And she doth cry out: O

Christ, my foundation

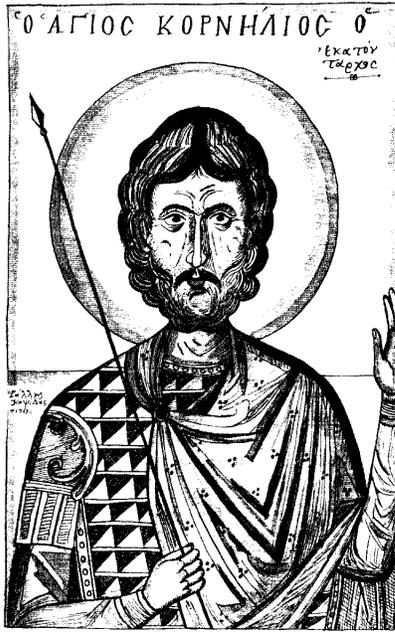
THE HOLY MARTYR LONGINUS, THE CENTURION

and might art Thou.

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# Saint Cornelius The Centurion

September 13<sup>th</sup>



Cornelius was a Roman and an officer in Caesarea of Palestine. As the result of a heavenly revelation, the Apostle Peter baptized him (Acts 10:1). He was the first among the pagans to enter God's Church. Until then, some thought that the Church was only for the Jews and those who received the circumcision of the Jews. Having been baptized, Cornelius left everything and followed the apostle. Later, Peter consecrated him a bishop and sent him to the pagan town of Skep, where St. Cornelius endured much humiliation and torture for the sake of Christ. Even so, he destroyed the temple of Apollo there by the power of God, and baptized Prince Demetrius with 277 other pagans. Being forewarned by God of the day of his death, Cornelius summoned all the Christians together, counseled them, prayed to God for them, and peacefully presented himself to the

Lord in honorable old age. In time, his grave site was neglected and forgotten, but the saint appeared to Silvanus the Bishop of Troas and revealed it to him, commanding that a church be built there. The bishop carried this out with the help of Eugenius, a wealthy citizen. Many miracles have been worked by the relics of St. Cornelius.

THE HOLY MARTYR CORNELIUS, THE CENTURION

*Kontakion*

O inspired Cornelius, the

Church has received

thee as a first-fruit

of the Gentiles, and thou

THE HOLY MARTYR CORNELIUS, THE CENTURION

has illuminated her with

thy works.

# The Holy Protomartyr Stephen The Archdeacon

December 27<sup>th</sup>



Stephen was a kinsman of the Apostle Paul and one of those Jews who lived in the Hellenic provinces. Stephen was the first of the seven deacons whom the holy apostles ordained and appointed to the service of assisting the poor in Jerusalem. For this, he is called the archdeacon. By the power of his faith, Stephen worked great miracles among the people. The wicked Jews disputed with him, but they were always defeated by his wisdom and the power of the Spirit, Who acted through him. Then the shameful Jews, accustomed to calumnies and slander, incited the people and the elders of the people against the innocent Stephen, slandering him as though he had blasphemed against God and against Moses. False witnesses were quickly found who

confirmed this. Stephen then stood before the people, and *“all saw his face as it had been the face of an angel”* (Acts 6:15), that is, his face was illumined with the light of grace as was once the face of Moses when he spoke with God. Stephen opened his mouth and enumerated the many good works and miracles that God had performed in the past for the people of Israel, as well as the many crimes and opposition to God on the part of this people. He especially rebuked them for the killing of Christ the Lord, calling them *“betrayers and murderers”* (Acts 7:52). And while they gnashed their teeth, Stephen beheld and saw the heavens open and the glory of God. That which he saw, he declared to the Jews: *“Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God!”* (Acts 7:56). Then the malicious men took him outside the city and stoned him to death. Among his persecutors was his kinsman Saul, later the Apostle Paul. At that time, the Most-holy Theotokos, standing on a rock at a distance with St. John the Theologian, witnessed the martyrdom of this first martyr for the truth of her Son and God, and she prayed to God for Stephen. This occurred one year after the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. Gamaliel, a prince of the Jews and a secret Christian, clandestinely took St. Stephen’s body and buried it on his own estate. Thus, this first among the Christian martyrs gloriously reposed and took up his habitation in the Kingdom of Christ God.

THE HOLY PROTOMARTYR STEPHEN THE ARCHDEACON

*Troparion*

Thou art crowned with a

royal diadem for

contests endured in

Christ's name, O First

THE HOLY PROTOMARTYR STEPHEN THE ARCHDEACON

and holy Martyr; thou

didst put to shame thy

persecutors and see thy

Saviour at the right

THE HOLY PROTOMARTYR STEPHEN THE ARCHDEACON

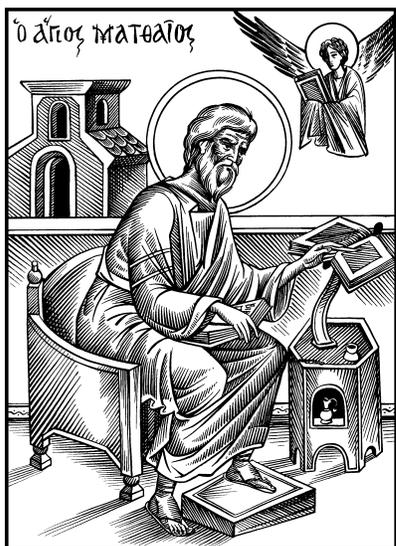
hand of the Father.

Ever pray to Him for

our souls.

# The Holy Apostle Matthew The Evangelist

November 16<sup>th</sup>



Matthew, son of Alphaeus, was a tax collector when the Lord saw him in Capernaum and said: “*Follow Me. And he arose, and followed Him*” (Matthew 9:9). After that, Matthew prepared a reception for the Lord in his home and thus provided the occasion for the Lord to express several great truths about His coming to earth. After receiving the Holy Spirit, Matthew preached the Gospel to the Parthians, Medes and Ethiopians. In Ethiopia he appointed his follower Plato as bishop, and withdrew to prayerful solitude on a mountain, where the Lord appeared to him. Matthew baptized the wife and the son of the prince of Ethiopia, at which the prince became greatly enraged and dispatched a guard to bring Matthew to him for trial. The soldiers returned to the prince saying that they had heard Matthew’s voice, but could

not see him with their eyes. The prince then sent a second guard. When this guard approached the apostle, he shone with a heavenly light so powerful that the soldiers could not look at him; filled with fear, they threw down their weapons and returned. The prince then went himself. Matthew radiated such light that the prince was instantly blinded. However, the holy apostle had a compassionate heart; he prayed to God, and the prince was given back his sight. Unfortunately, he saw only with physical eyes and not spiritual eyes. He arrested Matthew and subjected him to cruel tortures. Twice, a large fire was lighted on his chest, but the power of God preserved him alive and unharmed. Then the apostle prayed to God and gave up his spirit. The prince commanded that the martyr’s body be placed in a lead coffin and thrown into the sea. The saint appeared to Bishop Plato and told him where the coffin bearing his body could be found. The bishop retrieved the coffin with Matthew’s body from the sea. Witnessing this new miracle, the prince was baptized and received the name of Matthew. After that, the prince left all the vanity of the world and became a presbyter and served the Church in a God-pleasing way. When Plato died, the Apostle Matthew appeared to the presbyter Matthew and counseled him to accept the episcopacy. He accepted the bishopric and, for many years, was a good shepherd until the Lord called him to His Immortal Kingdom. St. Matthew the Apostle wrote his gospel in the Aramaic language. It was soon after translated into Greek and the Greek text has come down to us, while the Aramaic text has been lost. It is said of this evangelist that he never ate meat, but only vegetables and fruit.

THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST MATTHEW

*Troparion*

O holy Apostle and

Evangelist Matthew,

intercede with the

merciful God that He

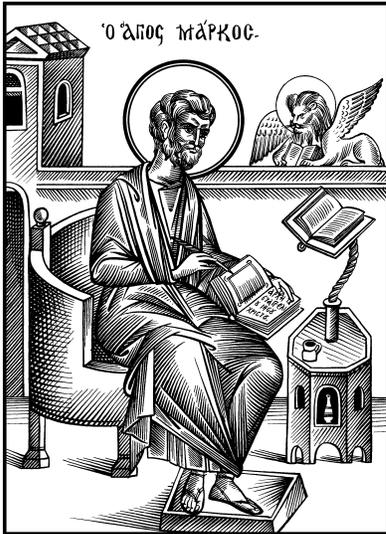
THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST MATTHEW

grant unto our souls

forgiveness of offences.

# The Holy Apostle And Evangelist Mark

April 25<sup>th</sup>



Mark was a traveling companion and assistant to the Apostle Peter who, in his first epistle calls him his son, *"The chosen one at Babylon sends you his greeting as does Mark, my son"* (1 Peter 5:13), not according to the flesh but a son according to the spirit. While Mark was in Rome with Peter, the faithful begged him to write down for them the saving teaching of the Lord Jesus, His miracles and His life. Thus, Mark wrote the Holy Gospel which the Apostle Peter himself saw and attested to its truthfulness. Mark was appointed a bishop by the Apostle Peter and was sent to Egypt to preach. As so, St. Mark was the first preacher of the Good News [Gospel] in Egypt and was the first bishop in Egypt. Egypt was entirely oppressed by the thick darkness of paganism, idolatry, soothsaying and

malice. With the help of God, St. Mark succeeded to sow the seed of the teaching of Christ throughout Libiya, Ammonicia and Pentopolis. From Pentopolis, St. Mark came to Alexandria where the Spirit of God led him. In Alexandria, he succeeded in establishing the Church of God and installed bishops, priests and deacons and to firmly strengthen them all in the honorable Faith. Mark confirmed his preaching through many and great miracles. When the heathens raised accusations against Mark, as a destroyer of their idolatrous faith, and when the mayor of the city began to search for Mark, he again fled to Pentopolis where he continued to strengthen his earlier work. After two years, Mark again returned to Alexandria to the great joy of all the faithful, whose number was greatly multiplied. On this occasion, the pagans seized Mark, bound him tightly and began to drag him over the cobblestone pavement crying out: "Let us drag the ox to the pen." Wounded and bloodied throughout, they cast Mark into prison where, at first, a heavenly angel appeared to him encouraging and strengthening him. After that, the Lord Jesus Himself appeared to him and said: "Peace be to you Mark, my Evangelist!" To that Mark replied: "Peace be to you also my Lord Jesus Christ!" The next day the vicious men brought Mark out of prison and again dragged him throughout the streets with the same cry: "Let us drag the ox to the pen." Completely exhausted and worn out, Mark uttered: "Into Your hands O Lord, I give up my spirit." Mark expired and his soul was translated into a better world. His holy relics were honorably buried by Christians and, through the centuries, his relics give healing to people from all of their afflictions, pains and diseases.

THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST MARK

*Troparion*

O Holy Apostle and

Evangelist Mark,

intercede with the

merciful God that He

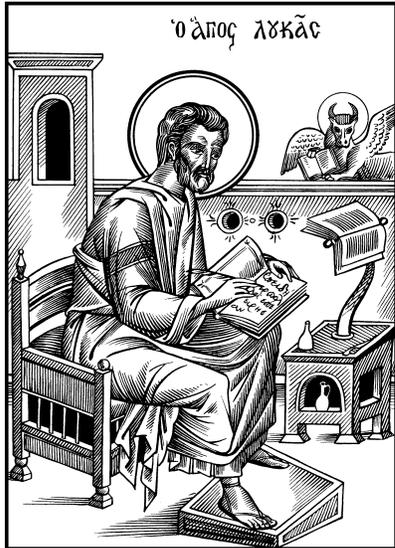
THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST MARK

grant unto our souls

forgiveness of offences.

# The Holy Apostle And Evangelist Luke

October 18<sup>th</sup>



Luke was born in Antioch. In his youth, he excelled in his studies of Greek philosophy, medicine and art. During the ministry of the Lord Jesus on earth, Luke came to Jerusalem, where he saw the Savior face to face, heard His saving teaching and was witness to His miraculous works. Coming to belief in the Lord, St. Luke was numbered among the Seventy Apostles, and was sent out to preach. With Cleopas, he saw the resurrected Lord on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24). After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Luke returned to Antioch and there became a fellow worker of the Apostle Paul and traveled to Rome with him, converting Jews and pagans to the Christian Faith. *“Luke the beloved physician, ...greet you,”* writes the Apostle Paul to the Colossians. (Colossians 4:14). At

the request of Christians, he wrote his Gospel in about the year 60. Following the martyrdom of the great Apostle Paul, St. Luke preached the Gospel throughout Italy, Dalmatia, Macedonia and other regions. He painted icons of the Most-holy Theotokos—not just one, but three—and icons of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. Hence, St. Luke is considered to be the founder of Christian iconography. In old age, he visited Libya and Upper Egypt. From Egypt he returned to Greece, where he continued to preach and convert many with great zeal despite his old age. In addition to his Gospel, St. Luke wrote the Acts and dedicated both works to Theophilus, the governor of Achaia. Luke was eighty-four years old when the wicked idolaters tortured him for the sake of Christ and hanged him from an olive tree in the town of Thebes, in Boethia. The miracle-working relics of this wonderful saint were transported to Constantinople in the reign of Emperor Constantius, the son of Constantine.

THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST LUKE

*Troparion*

O holy Apostle and

Evangelist Luke, intercede

with the merciful God

that He grant unto our

THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST LUKE

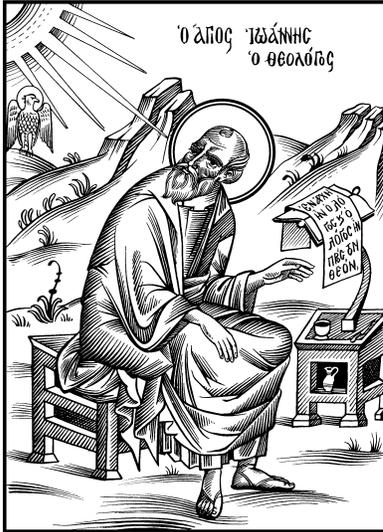
souls for forgiveness of

offences.

# The Holy Apostle And Evangelist,

## John The Theologion

September 26<sup>th</sup>



John was the son of Zebedee the fisherman and Salome the daughter of Joseph, the betrothed of the Holy Theotokos. Called by the Lord Jesus, John immediately left his father and his fishermen's nets and with his brother James, followed Christ. From then on, he was not separated from his Lord until the end. With Peter and James, he was present at the raising of Jairus' daughter and the Transfiguration of the Lord. At the Last Supper, he inclined his head on Jesus' breast. When all the other apostles had abandoned the crucified Lord, John and the Holy Mother of God remained beneath the Cross. In obedience to the Lord, he was as a son to the Holy Virgin Mary, and carefully served and watched over

her until her Dormition. After her Dormition, John took his disciple Prochorus to preach the Gospel in Asia Minor. He lived and labored mostly in Ephesus. By his inspired preaching and miracles he converted many to Christianity and shook paganism to its foundation. The embittered pagans bound him and sent him to Rome, to face Emperor Dometian. Dometian had him tortured and flogged, but neither the bitterest poison he was given to drink, nor the boiling oil into which he was thrown, did him any harm. This terrified the emperor and, thinking him immortal, Dometian sent him into exile to the island of Patmos. There St. John converted many to Christianity by words and miracles, and confirmed well the Church of God. He also wrote his gospel and Revelation on Patmos. In the time of Emperor Nero, who granted freedom to all prisoners, John returned to Ephesus, where he lived for some time, confirming the work he had begun earlier. He was over one hundred years old when he went to the Lord. When his disciples later opened his grave, they did not find his body. On May 8 of every year, a fine dust, fragrant and healing, rose from his grave. After a long laborious and fruitful life on earth, this beloved disciple of Christ, a true pillar of the Church, took up his habitation in the joy of His Lord.

THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST JOHN THE THEOLOGION

*Kontakion*

Who can tell thy mighty

works, O virgin Saint?

For thou pourest forth

miracles, and art a source

THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST JOHN THE THEOLOGION

of healings, and thou dost

intercede for our souls,

as the Theologian and the

friend of Christ.

# The Holy Apostles, Peter And Paul

June 29<sup>th</sup>



PETER was the son of Jonah and the brother of Andrew, the First-called. He was of the Tribe of Simeon from the town of Bethsaida. He was a fisherman and, at first, was called Simon but the Lord was pleased to call him Cephas or Peter: *"And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, You are Simon the son of Jonah: you shall be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a rock"* (St. John 1:42). He was the first of the disciples to clearly express faith in the Lord Jesus saying: *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"* (St. Matthew 16:16). His love for the Lord was great and his faith in the Lord gradually strengthened. When the Lord was brought to trial, Peter denied Him three times but after only one glance into the face of the Lord, Peter's soul was filled with shame and repentance. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Peter appears as a fearless and powerful preacher of the Gospel. Following one of his sermons in Jerusalem, three-thousand souls converted to the Faith. He preached the Gospel throughout Palestine and Asia Minor, throughout Illyria and Italy. Peter worked many powerful miracles; he healed the sick, resurrected the dead; the sick were healed even from his shadow. He had a great struggle with Simon the Magician who proclaimed himself as god but in reality Simon was a servant of Satan. Finally, Peter shamed and defeated him. By order of the evil Emperor Nero, Simon's friend, Peter was condemned to death. Installing Linus as Bishop of Rome, counseling and comforting the flock of Christ, Peter proceeded joyfully to his death. Seeing the cross before him, he begged his executioners to crucify him upside down for he considered himself unworthy to die as did his Lord. Thus the great servant of the Great Lord reposed and received the wreath of eternal glory.

PAUL was born in Tarsus of the tribe of Benjamin. At first, he was called Saul, studied under Gamaliel, was a Pharisee and a persecutor of Christianity. He was miraculously converted to the Christian Faith by the Lord Himself Who appeared to him on the road to Damascus. He was baptized by the Apostle Ananias, was called Paul and numbered in the service of the great apostles. With a fiery zeal, Paul preached the Gospel everywhere from the borders of Arabia to Spain, among the Jews and among the Gentiles. He received the title "Apostle to the Gentiles." As horrible as his sufferings were, so much more was his super human patience. Throughout all the years of his preaching Paul, from day to day, hung as one on a weak thread between life and death. Since he fulfilled all days and nights with labor and suffering for Christ, since he organized the Church in many places and since he attained such a degree of perfection he was able to say: *"It is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me"* (Galatians 2:20). Paul was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero at the same time as the Apostle Peter.

THE HOLY APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL

*Troparion*

O foremost of the

Apostles and teachers

of the world, intercede

ye with the Masters of

THE HOLY APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL

all that He grant peace

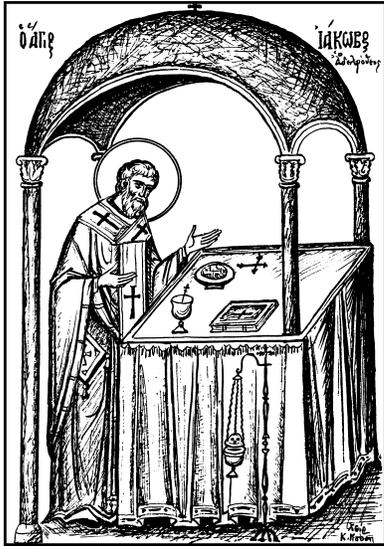
to the world and great

mercy to our souls.

# Holy Saint James, The Lord's Brother

## First Bishop Of Jerusalem

October 23<sup>rd</sup>



James is called the Lord's brother because he was the son of the righteous Joseph, the betrothed of the Most-holy Theotokos. When the righteous Joseph was near death, he divided his estate among his sons, and wanted to leave a portion to the Lord Jesus, the son of the Most-holy Virgin, but all the other brothers opposed this, not regarding Jesus as their brother. James greatly loved Jesus and declared that he would include Jesus in his share. That is why he is called the Lord's brother. From the beginning, James was devoted to the Lord Jesus. According to tradition, he traveled to Egypt with the Most-holy Virgin and Joseph, when Herod sought to slay the newborn King. Later, as soon as he heard Christ's teaching, James lived by it. It is said of him that he

never ate fat or oil, but lived on just bread and water, and was a virgin to the end of his life on earth. He often kept vigil at night and prayed to God. The Lord numbered him among His Seventy Apostles. Following His glorious Resurrection, the Lord appeared to him especially, as the Apostle Paul testifies (I Corinthians 15:7). He was Bishop of Jerusalem for thirty years and zealously governed the Church of God. At the instruction of the Lord, James compiled the first Liturgy, which seemed very long for later Christians, and St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom shortened it. He converted many Jews and Greeks to the Christian Faith, and even the unbelieving Jews were amazed at his righteousness, referring to him as "James the Just." When Ananias became High Priest, he and other Jewish elders determined to kill James for being a preacher of Christ. Once, during the feast of Passover, when many people had gathered in Jerusalem, the elders forced James to climb onto the roof of the Temple, and tried to make him speak against Christ. He climbed up and spoke to the people of Christ as the Son of God and the true Messiah, of His Resurrection and His eternal glory in the heavens. The infuriated priests and elders pushed him off the roof; he fell and was severely injured, but was still alive. Then, one man ran up and struck him on the head with a fuller's club with such force that his brains spilled out. Thus, this most glorious apostle of Christ died a martyr's death, and went to live eternally in the Kingdom of his Lord. James was sixty-six years old when he suffered for Christ.

HOLY SAINT JAMES, BROTHER OF THE LORD

*Troparion*

As a disciple of the

Lord, O righteous one,

thou hast received the

Gospel. As a Martyr

HOLY SAINT JAMES, BROTHER OF THE LORD

thou art never turned

away. As the Brother

of God thou hast

boldness. As a hierarch

HOLY SAINT JAMES, BROTHER OF THE LORD

thou canst intercede.

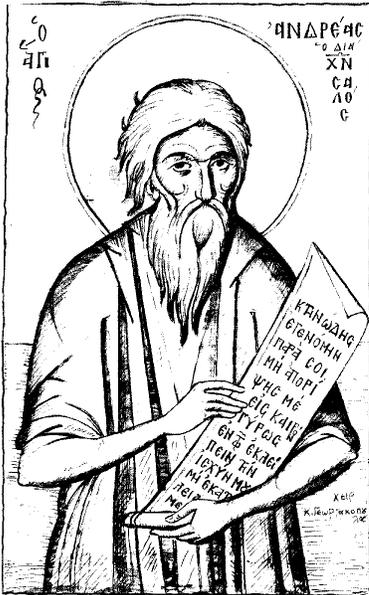
Do thou intercede with

Christ God that He

save our souls.

# The Holy Apostle Andrew, The First-Called

November 30<sup>th</sup>



Andrew, the son of Jonah and brother of Peter, was born in Bethsaida and was a fisherman by trade. At first he was a disciple of St. John the Baptist, but when St. John pointed to the Lord Jesus, saying, “Behold the Lamb of God!” (John 1:36), Andrew left his first teacher and followed Christ. Then, Andrew brought his brother Peter to the Lord. Following the descent of the Holy Spirit, it fell by lot to the first apostle of Christ, St. Andrew, to preach the Gospel in Byzantium and Thrace, then in the lands along the Danube and in Russia around the Black Sea, and finally in Epirus, Greece and the Peloponnese, where he suffered. In Byzantium, he appointed St. Stachys as its first bishop; in Kiev, he planted a Cross on a high place and prophesied a bright Christian future for the Russian people; throughout Thrace, Epirus, Greece and the Peloponnese, he converted

multitudes of people to the Faith and ordained bishops and priests for them. In the city of Patras, he performed many miracles in the name of Christ, and won many over to the Lord. Among the new faithful were the brother and wife of the Proconsul Aegeates. Angered at this, Aegeates subjected St. Andrew to torture and then crucified him. While the apostle of Christ was still alive on the cross, he gave beneficial instructions to the Christians who had gathered around. The people wanted to take him down from the cross but he refused to let them. Then the apostle prayed to God and an extraordinary light encompassed him. This brilliant illumination lasted for half an hour, and when it disappeared, the apostle gave up his holy soul to God. Thus, the First-called Apostle, the first of the Twelve Great Apostles to know the Lord and follow Him, finished his earthly course. St. Andrew suffered for his Lord in the year 62. His relics were taken to Constantinople; his head was later taken to Rome, and one hand was taken to Moscow.

THE HOLY APOSTLE ANDREW, THE FIRST CALLED

*Troparion*

As the first-called of

the Apostles, and

brother of their leader,

O Andrew, entreat the

THE HOLY APOSTLE ANDREW, THE FIRST CALLED

Master of all that peace

be granted unto the

world and great mercy

to our souls.



## *The Holy Apostle James*

*April 30<sup>th</sup>*

James was the son of Zebedee, brother of John and one of the Twelve Apostles. At the invitation of the Lord Jesus, James left the fishermen's net, his father and, together with John, immediately followed after the Lord. He belonged to that trinity of apostles to whom the Lord revealed the greatest mysteries; before whom He was transfigured on Tabor and before whom He lamented before His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. After receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, he preached the Gospel in various places and traveled to Spain. Upon his return from Spain, the Jews began to quarrel with him concerning Holy Scripture and no one was able to withstand him, not even a certain magician Hermogenes. Hermogenes and his disciple Philip were defeated by the power of truth, which James preached and, both of them were baptized. Then the Jews accused him before Herod and persuaded Josias to slander the apostle. Josias, seeing the brave conduct of James and listening to his clear explanation about the truth, repented and believed in Christ. When James was condemned to death, this same Josias was also condemned to death. Enroute to the place of execution, Josias implored James to forgive him the sin of slander. James embraced and kissed him and said: "Peace and forgiveness be to you!" Both of them bowed their heads under the sword and were beheaded for the Lord Whom they loved and Whom they served. Saint James suffered in Jerusalem in the year 45 A.D. His body was translated to Spain, where miraculous healings occurred over his grave and, do so even today.

THE HOLY APOSTLE JAMES

*Kontakion*

The voice of thy God

thou heardest when it

called to thee, O glorious

James; hence, casting

THE HOLY APOSTLE JAMES

off thy father's love,

thou together with John

thy brother didst run

straightway to Christ

THE HOLY APOSTLE JAMES

the Lord, and with him

was granted to see the

Lord's most divine

Transfiguration.



## The Holy Apostle Bartholomew

June 11<sup>th</sup>

Bartholomew was one of the Twelve Great Apostles. In all probability, it appears that Bartholomew and Nathaniel are one and the same person. He was a companion of the Apostle Philip and Philip's sister, the virgin Mariamna and, for some time, a companion of St. John the Theologian. Bartholomew preached the Gospel first throughout Asia and, after that, in India and finally in Armenia where he died a martyr's death. In Hierapolis, these holy apostles by prayer, caused the death of a large serpent which the heathens kept in their temple and worshipped. In this same city and, by prayer, they restored sight to Stachius who was blind for forty years. It was here that a mob rose up against them and they crucified Philip and Bartholomew (Bartholomew was crucified upside down). At this time, an earthquake occurred in which the evil judges and many people perished. Feeling that this was a punishment from God, many ran to remove the apostles from the crosses but Philip was already dead while Bartholomew was still alive. After this, Bartholomew went to India where he preached and translated the Gospel of St. Matthew into the Indian language. Following this, he entered Armenia where he cured the daughter of the king from insanity. But the envious brother of King Astyages seized God's apostle, crucified him on a cross, skinned him and finally beheaded him in Armenian Albanopolis [Derbend]. Christians honorably buried his body in a lead sarcophagus. Because many miracles occurred over his relics, the pagans took the sarcophagus and tossed it into the sea. But the water carried the sarcophagus to the Island of Lipara where Bishop Agathon, through a revelation in a dream, met and buried it in the church. St. Bartholomew, attired in a white garment, appeared in church to Venerable Joseph, the Hymnographer, blessed him with the Gospel that he may be able to sing spiritual hymns saying: "Let heavenly waters of wisdom flow from your tongue!" He also appeared to Emperor Anastasius (491-518 A.D.) and told him that he would protect the newly established town of Dara. Later, the relics of this great apostle were translated to Benevento and then to Rome. Great and awesome miracles have occurred over these relics.

THE HOLY APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW

*Kontakion*

To the Church thou

hast appeared as a great

daystar; with thy

teachings as thy rays

THE HOLY APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW

and beams of awesome

miracles, thou hast

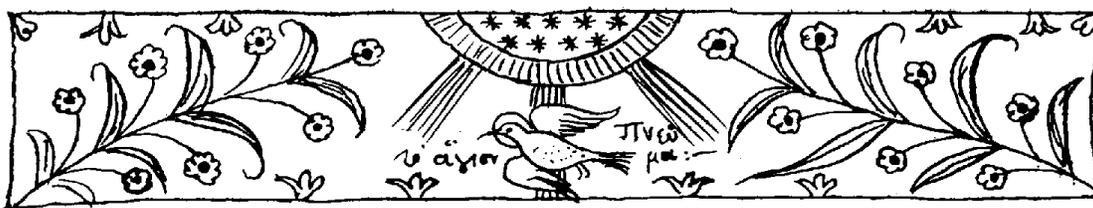
enlightened those

praising thee, the Lord's

THE HOLY APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW

Apostle, O sacred

Bartholomew.



## *The Holy Apostle Jude*

*June 19<sup>th</sup>*

Saint Jude was one of the Twelve Apostles. He was the son of Joseph and Salome and the brother of James, the brother of the Lord. With Salome, the daughter of Angeja the son of Varahina, the brother of Zacharias, Joseph the carpenter had four sons: James, Hosea, Simon and Jude. This Jude is sometimes called: "Jude, the brother of James" because of his more famous brother (St. Luke 6:16 Acts 1:14). St. Jude begins his epistle in this manner: "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and the brother of James" (St. Jude 1:1). Even though he could be called the brother of the Lord as much as James, he did not do this out of humility and shame for, in the beginning, he did not believe Christ the Lord. When the elder Joseph, before his death, wanted to leave a portion of his estate to Jesus as well as to his other children, all of them protested this, even Jude, only James voluntarily set aside a share of his portion and intended it for Jesus. Jude is also called Levi and Thaddeaus. There is another Thaddeaus of the Seventy Apostles (August 21) but this Thaddeaus or Jude was one of the Great Apostles. Jude preached the Gospel throughout Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Idumedia, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Armenia. In Edessa, the town of Abgar, he augmented the preaching of the other Thaddeaus. When Jude preached throughout the regions around Ararat he was captured by pagans, crucified on a cross and killed by being shot throughout with arrows to eternally reign in the Kingdom of Christ.

THE HOLY APOSTLE JUDE

*Kontakion*

Sprung from a noble

root, thou art risen

before us, a branch

bestowed by God, ever

THE HOLY APOSTLE JUDE

feeding the whole world

upon the fruits of thy

words, O eyewitness of

God the Lord, O thou

THE HOLY APOSTLE JUDE

brother of our God, and

Christ's all-wise herald,

who has taught the

Lord's pure Orthodox

THE HOLY APOSTLE JUDE

Faith to all men, initiate

of His grace.

# The Holy Apostle Thomas

October 6<sup>th</sup>



Thomas was one of the Twelve Apostles. Through his doubt in the Resurrection of Christ the Lord, a new proof was given of that wonderful and saving event. The resurrected Lord appeared to His disciples a second time, in order to convince Thomas. The Lord said to Thomas: *“Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing.”* And Thomas replied: *“My Lord and my God”* (John 20:27-28). After the descent of the Holy Spirit, when the apostles cast lots to see where they would each go to preach, the lot fell to Thomas to go to India. He was a little saddened that he had to go so far away, but the Lord appeared to him and encouraged him. In India, St. Thomas converted many, both aristocrats and

poor, to the Christian Faith, and established the Church there, appointing priests and bishops. Among others, Thomas converted two sisters to the Faith—Tertiana and Migdonia—both wives of Indian princes. Because of their faith, both sisters were ill-treated by their husbands, with whom they no longer wanted to live after their baptism. Eventually, they were allowed to go. Being freed of marriage, they lived God-pleasing lives until their repose. Dionysius and Pelagia were betrothed, but when they heard the apostolic preaching they did not marry, but devoted themselves to the ascetic life. Pelagia ended her life as a martyr for the Faith, and Dionysius was ordained a bishop by the apostle. Prince Mazdai, Tertiana’s husband, whose son, Azan, was also baptized by Thomas, condemned the apostle to death. Mazdai sent five soldiers to kill Thomas. They ran him through with their five spears, and thus the Holy Apostle Thomas rendered his soul into the hands of Christ. Before his death, he and the other apostles were miraculously brought to Jerusalem for the burial of the Most-holy Theotokos. Arriving too late, he wept bitterly, and the tomb of the Holy Most-pure One was opened at his request. The Theotokos’ body was not found in the tomb: the Lord had taken His Mother to His heavenly habitation. Thus, in his tardiness St. Thomas revealed to us the wondrous glorification of the Mother of God, just as he had once confirmed faith in the Resurrection of the Lord by his unbelief.

THE HOLY APOSTLE THOMAS

*Kontakion*

Christ's Apostle, who

was filled with God's

divine grace, he who was

His genuine and faithful

## THE HOLY APOSTLE THOMAS

servant in all truth, all-

lauded Thomas exclaimed

aloud in deep repentance:

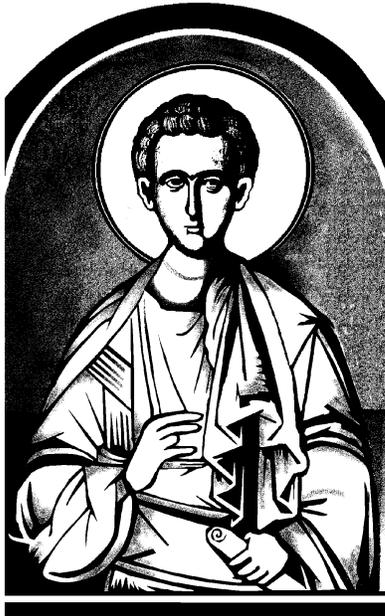
Thou art both my God

THE HOLY APOSTLE THOMAS

and Lord.

# The Holy Apostle Philip

November 14<sup>th</sup>



Philip was born in Bethsaida beside the Sea of Galilee, as were Peter and Andrew. Instructed in Holy Scripture from his youth, Philip immediately responded to the call of the Lord Jesus and followed Him (John 1:43). After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Philip zealously preached the Gospel throughout many regions in Asia and Greece. In Greece, the Jews wanted to kill him, but the Lord saved him by His mighty miracles. Thus, a Jewish high priest that rushed at Philip to beat him was suddenly blinded and turned completely black. Then there was a great earthquake, and the earth opened up and swallowed Philip's wicked persecutor. Many other miracles were manifested, especially the healing of the sick, by which many pagans believed in Christ. In the Phrygian town of Hierapolis, St. Philip found himself in common evangelical work

with his sister Mariamna, St. John the Theologian, and the Apostle Bartholomew. In this town there was a dangerous snake that the pagans diligently fed and worshiped as a god. God's apostle killed the snake through prayer as though with a spear, but he also incurred the wrath of the unenlightened people. The wicked pagans seized Philip and crucified him upside-down on a tree, and then crucified Bartholomew as well. At that, the earth opened up and swallowed the judge and many other pagans with him. In great fear, the people rushed to rescue the crucified apostles, but only Bartholomew was still alive; Philip had already breathed his last. Bartholomew ordained Stachys as bishop for those whom he and Philip had baptized. Stachys had been blind for forty years, and Bartholomew and Philip had healed and baptized him. The relics of St. Philip were later translated to Rome. This wonderful apostle suffered in the year 86 in the time of Emperor Dometian.

THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP

*Kontakion*

The God-proclaiming

Philip, who was Thy

disciple and Thy friend,

who imitated Thy

THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP

Passion, hath heralded

Thee to the world as

very God; through his

pleadings, O Saviour,

THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP

keep Thy Church from

the harm of her lawless

enemies, through the

pure Theotokos, O Thou

THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP

Who art greatly

merciful.

# The Holy Apostle Simon, The Zealot

May 10<sup>th</sup>



Simon was one of the Twelve Great Apostles. He was born in Cana of Galilee. The Lord Jesus, with His mother and His disciples, came to his marriage feast. When the wine ran out, the Lord changed water into wine (St. John 2: 1-11). Witnessing this miracle, Simon the groom left his home, parents and bride and followed after Christ. Zealot means zealous. Simon was called the Zealot because of his great and fiery zeal for the Savior and His Gospel. After receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, Simon went to preach the Gospel in Mauritania in Africa. Because he succeeded to convert many to the Faith of Christ, Simon was tortured and finally crucified, as was his Lord, Who prepared for him a wreath of glory in the immortal kingdom.

THE HOLY APOSTLE SIMON, THE ZEALOT

*Troparion*

O holy Apostle Simon,

intercede with the

merciful God that He

grant unto our souls

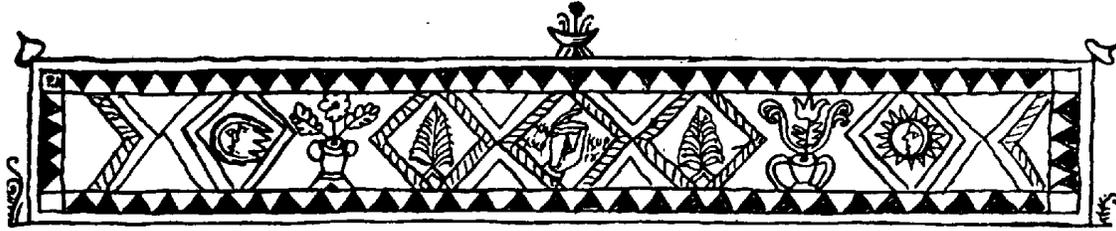
THE HOLY APOSTLE PHILIP

f<sup>2</sup>or g<sup>2</sup>iveness of offences.

\_\_\_\_\_

.....

\_\_\_\_\_



## The Holy Apostle Matthias

August 9<sup>th</sup>

Matthias was born in Bethlehem of the tribe of Judah. He studied with St. Simeon the "Receiver of God" in Jerusalem. When the Lord went out to preach about the Kingdom of God Matthias then joined the others who loved the Lord, for he himself loved Him with all his heart and with delight did he hear His words and witnessed His works. In the beginning, Matthias was numbered among the Seventy Lesser Disciples of Christ but following the resurrection of the Lord, since the place of Judas was vacated, the apostles, by drawing lots, chose this Matthias in place of Judas as one of the Twelve Great Apostles. *"And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus and Matthias. And they prayed and said: 'You Lord, who knows the hearts of all men, show which of these two You have chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell that he might go to his own place' "* (Acts 1:23-26). Receiving the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, Matthias set out to preach the Gospel, first of all in Judea and after that in Ethiopia where he endured great tortures for the sake of Christ. It is held that he preached throughout Macedonia where they wanted to blind him but he became invisible to his torturers and thus escaped danger. Being in prison, the Lord appeared to him, encouraged him and freed him. Finally, he returned again to his work in Judea. There he was accused and brought to court before the high priest Ananias before whom he fearlessly witnessed for Christ. Ananias, the same Ananias, who before that, slew the Apostle James, condemned Matthias to death. They led Matthias out, stoned him to death and, after that, decapitated him with an axe (this was the Roman manner of killing a person who was sentenced to death and the hypocritical Jews applied this method on the dead man so as to show the Romans that the slain person was an enemy of Rome). Thus, this great apostle of Christ died and took up habitation in the eternal joy of his Lord.

THE HOLY APOSTLE MATTHIAS

*Kontakion*

Truly, into all the world

thy sound hath gone

forth as a brightly—

beaming sun; and it

THE HOLY APOSTLE MATTHIAS

enlighteneth by grace

the Church of all nations

on the earth, O

wonderworking

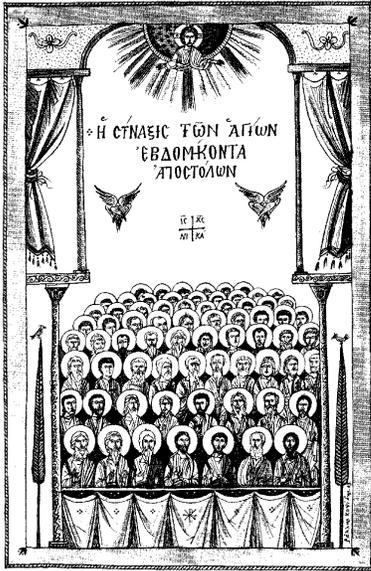
THE HOLY APOSTLE MATTHIAS

Matthias, Apostle of

Christ.

# The Synaxis Of The Seventy Holy Apostles

January 4<sup>th</sup>



Besides the Twelve Greater Apostles, the Lord chose Seventy Lesser Apostles and sent them to preach the Gospel, *"After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place He intended to visit, He said to them, 'The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.' Go on your way: behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way. Into whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this household' "* (St. Luke 10:1-5). But, as Judas, one of the Twelve, fell away from the Lord, so it was with some of the Seventy who abandoned the Lord not with the intention of betrayal but because of human weakness and faintheartedness. *"As a result of this,*

*many of His disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied Him"* (St. John 6:66). As Judas' place was filled by another apostle, *"So they [The Apostles] proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed, 'You, Lord, Who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have chosen to take the place in this apostolic ministry from which Judas turned away to go to his own place'. Then they gave lots to them, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was counted with the eleven apostles"* (Acts of the Apostles 1:23-26); so also were the places of these lesser apostles filled by others that were chosen. These Seventy Lesser Apostles labored at the same work as did the Twelve Great Apostles; they were co-workers with the Twelve in spreading and establishing the Church of God in the world. They endured many sufferings and malevolent acts from men and demons, but their strong faith and fervent love for the resurrected Lord made them victors over the world and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

THE SYNAXIS OF THE SEVENTY HOLY APOSTLES

*Kontakion*

Let us praise the choirs of

Christ's Seventy

Disciples, O faithful, and

celebrate their Festival.

They have taught us to

THE SYNAXIS OF THE SEVENTY HOLY APOSTLES

worship, the Undivided

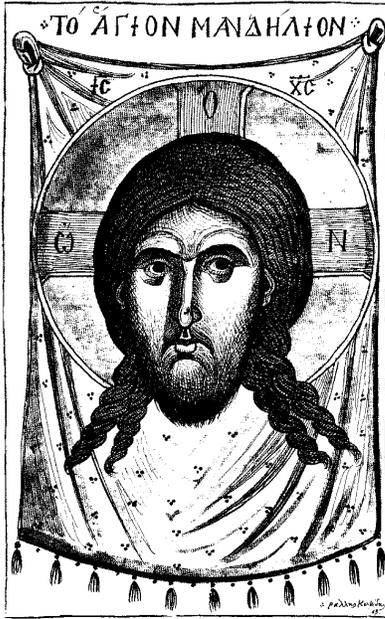
Trinity; for they are

divine lamps of the Faith.



# The Holy Apostle Thaddaeus

August 21<sup>st</sup>



Thaddaeus was one of the Seventy Apostles but not the Thaddaeus who was one of the Twelve Apostles. St. Thaddaeus first saw and heard John the Baptist and received baptism from him and after that he saw the Lord Jesus and followed Him. The Lord numbered him among the seventy lesser apostles whom He sent two by two before His face, *"After these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place where He Himself would come"* (St. Luke 10:1). After His glorious Resurrection and Ascension, the Lord sent Thaddaeus to Edessa, Thaddaeus' birthplace, according to the promise He gave to Prince Abgar at the time when He sent the towel with His face on it. By kissing the towel, Abgar was healed of leprosy but not completely. A little leprosy still

remained on his face. When St. Thaddaeus appeared to Abgar, he received him with great joy. The apostle of Christ instructed him in the true faith and after that baptized him. When the baptized Abgar came out of the water, the remaining leprosy fell from him and he was completely healed. Glorifying God, Prince Abgar also wanted that his people should know the true God and to glorify Him. The prince assembled all the citizens of Edessa before the holy Apostle Thaddaeus to hear teaching about Christ. Hearing the words of the apostle and seeing their prince miraculously healed, the people rejected the idols, unclean living, embraced the Faith of Christ and were baptized. Thus, the city of Edessa was illumined by the Faith of Christ. Prince Abgar brought much gold and offered it to the apostle but Thaddaeus said to him: " Since we left our own gold, how can we receive the gold of others?" St. Thaddaeus preached the Gospel throughout Syria and Phoenicia. He reposed in the Lord in the Phoenician city of Beirut.

(Ed. Note: see "Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History of the Church: Book 1" for this story)

THE HOLY APOSTLE THADDAEUS

*Troparion*

O Holy Apostle

Thaddaeus, intercede

with the merciful God

that He grant unto our

souls forgiveness of

THE HOLY APOSTLE THADDAEUS

offences.



## The Holy Apostle Timothy

January 22<sup>nd</sup>

Timothy was one of the Seventy Apostles. He was born in Lystra in Lycaonia of a Greek father and a Jewish mother. The Apostle Paul praised his mother and grandmother because of their sincere faith. *"I yearn to see you again, recalling your tears, so that I may be filled with joy, as I recall your sincere faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and that, I am confident, lives also in you"* (II Timothy 1: 4-5). Timothy first met with the great apostle in Lystra and was himself a witness when Paul healed the one lame from birth. Later, Timothy was an almost constant traveling companion of Paul, traveling with him to Achaia, Macedonia, Italy and Spain. Sweet in soul, he was a great zealot for the Faith, and a superb preacher. Timothy contributed much to the spreading and establishing of the Christian Faith. Paul calls him *"my own son in the faith."* *"Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus, Who is our hope, to Timothy, my own son in the Faith: grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord"* (I Timothy 1: 1-2). After Paul's martyrdom, Timothy had St. John the Evangelist as his teacher. But when the Emperor Domentian banished John from Ephesus to the island of Patmos, Timothy remained in Ephesus to serve as bishop. During the time of an idolatrous feast called Katagogium, the pagans, resentful of the Christians, treacherously and in disguise, attacked Timothy and killed him about the year 93 A.D. Later his honorable relics were translated to Constantinople and interred in the Church of the Twelve Apostles along side of the grave of St. Luke the Evangelist and St. Andrew the First-called.

THE HOLY APOSTLE TIMOTHY

*Troparion*

Since thou hadst been

instructed in uprightness

thoroughly and wast

vigilant in all things,

thou wast clothed with

THE HOLY APOSTLE TIMOTHY

a good conscience as

befitteth one holy.

Thou didst draw from

the Chosen Vessel

ineffable mysteries; and

THE HOLY APOSTLE TIMOTHY

having kept the Faith,

thou didst finish a like

course, O Hieromartyr

and Apostle Timothy.

Intercede with Christ

THE HOLY APOSTLE TIMOTHY

God that our souls be

saved.



THE HOLY APOSTLE TITUS

*Kontakion*

○ yoke-mate of Paul,

together with him, thou

didst preach the tidings

to us of saving grace

bestowed of God, ○

THE HOLY APOSTLE TITUS

Apostle Titus, blest and

elect revealer of

mysteries; for which cause

we cry out to thee: Cease

not to entreat Christ

THE HOLY APOSTLE TITUS

God for all of us.



## *The Holy Apostle Barnabas*

*June 11<sup>th</sup>*

Barnabas was one of the Seventy Apostles. He was born in Cyprus of wealthy parents from the tribe of Levi and studied together with Saul under Gamaliel. At first, he was called Joseph but the apostles then called him Barnabas, Son of Consolation, because he was exceptionally capable of comforting the souls of the people. After Saul's conversion, Barnabas was the first to introduce Saul to the apostles and after that, with Paul [Saul] and Mark he preached the Gospel in Antioch and throughout other places. In all probability, he was the first to preach in Rome and Milan. He suffered on the island of Cyprus at the hands of the Jews and was buried by Mark beyond the western gate of the town of Salamis with the Gospel of St. Matthew on his chest which he, by his own hand, had copied. His grave remained unknown for several hundred years and since many received healing from sickness on this spot, this place was called: "the place of health." At the time of Emperor Zeno and the Chalcedon Council [451 A.D.], the apostle appeared to Archbishop Anthemius of Cyprus on three successive nights in a dream and revealed to him the location of Barnabas' grave. That appearance of the apostle occurred exactly at the time when Peter, the power-hungry Patriarch of Antioch, sought that the church in Cyprus be under the jurisdiction of the throne of Antioch. After the appearance and discovery of the miraculous relics of the holy Apostle Barnabas, it was established that the church in Cyprus, as an Apostolic Church, should always be independent. Thus, the autocephaly of the Church in Cyprus was established.

THE HOLY APOSTLE BARNABAS

*Kontakion*

To thy Lord, O

Barnabas, thou wast a

genuine servant, and

among the Seventy

Apostles, thou wast the

THE HOLY APOSTLE BARNABAS

foremost; and with Paul

thou shonest brightly in

thy wise preaching.

making known unto all

men Christ Jesus, the

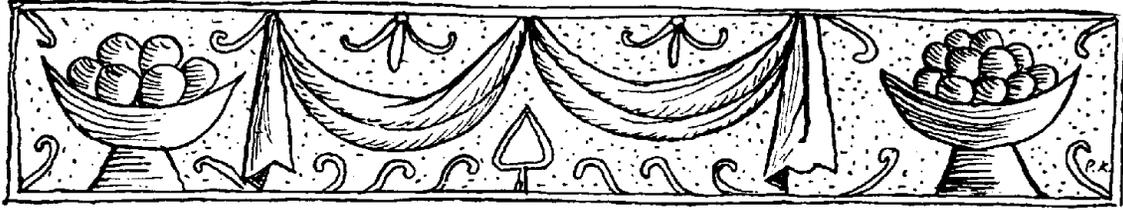
THE HOLY APOSTLE BARNABAS

Saviour. For this cause,

we celebrate thy divine

memorial with hymns and

spiritual songs.



## *The Holy Apostle Aquila*

July 14<sup>th</sup>

Aquila was one of the Seventy Apostles. As a Jew, he first lived in Italy with his wife Priscilla. When Emperor Claudius decreed that all Jews be driven from Rome and Italy, Aquila settled in Cornith, where the Apostle Paul met him for the first time and remained in his home for a year and a half and baptized him and his wife. Burning with zeal for the Faith of Christ, Aquila and Priscilla escorted Paul to Ephesus and assisted him in his apostolic labors. Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians from Ephesus in which, toward the end, he says: "Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the Church that is their house" (1 Corinthians 16:19). After the death of Emperor Claudius, the Jews were permitted to return to Italy, and so Aquila and Priscilla returned to Rome. After this the Apostle Paul writing the Epistle to the Romans from Cornith, greets his old friends and his co-laborers: "Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus; who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles" (Romans 16: 3-4). Later on, we see Aquila in Ephesus where he labors together with St. Timothy the Apostle. Chained in Rome, Paul writes to Timothy in Ephesus: "Salute Priscilla and Aquila" (2 Timothy 4:19). As a bishop, Aquila baptized many and illumined them with the Faith, destroyed idols, built churches, ordained priests and spread the glory of the Incarnate Son of God among men. In the end, he was murdered by the wicked heathens and took up habitation in the Kingdom of Christ.

THE HOLY APOSTLE AQUILA

*Troparion*

O holy Apostle Aquila,

intercede with the

merciful God that He

grant unto our souls

forgiveness of offences.



## *The Hieromartyr Clement, Bishop Of Rome*

*November 25<sup>th</sup>*

Clement was born in Rome of royal lineage and was a contemporary of the holy apostles. His mother and two brothers, traveling on the sea, were carried by a storm to different places. His father then went to find his wife and two sons and he, too, became lost. Clement, being twenty-four years old, then set out for the east to seek his parents and brothers. In Alexandria, he made the acquaintance of the Apostle Barnabas and, afterward, joined the Apostle Peter whom his two brothers, Faustinus and Faustinian, were already following. By God's providence, the Apostle Peter came upon Clement's mother as an aged beggar woman, and then found his father as well. Thus, the whole family was united, and all returned to Rome as Christians. Clement did not separate himself from the great apostle, who appointed him as bishop before his death. After Peter's martyrdom, Linus was Bishop of Rome, then Cletus—both of them for a short time—and then Clement. Clement governed the Church of God with flaming zeal, and from day to day brought a great number of unbelievers to the Christian Faith. In addition, he ordered seven scribes to write the lives of the Christian martyrs who were suffering at that time for their Lord. The Emperor Trajan banished him to Cherson, where Clement found about two thousand exiled Christians. All were occupied with the difficult job of hewing stones in a waterless land. The Christians received Clement with great joy and he was a living source of comfort for them. By his prayer, he brought forth water from the ground and converted so many of the unbelieving natives to Christianity that, in one year, seventy-five churches were built there. To prevent his spreading the Christian Faith even more, the authorities condemned Clement to death, and drowned him in the sea with a stone around his neck in the year 101. His miracle-working relics were removed from the sea only in the time of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

THE HIEROMARTYR CLEMENT, BISHOP OF ROME

*Kontakion*

O Divine, unshakeable

towers of Christ's

Church, pillars of true

piety who are most

mighty and divine.

THE HIEROMARTYR CLEMENT, BISHOP OF ROME

Clement and Peter ye

all-acclaimed, by your

entreaties, protect and

guard all of us.

# The Holy Apostle Onesimus

February 15<sup>th</sup>



Onesimus was one of the Seventy Lesser Apostles. He was a slave of Philemon but transgressed against his master and fled to Rome where he heard the Gospel from the Apostle Paul and was baptized. Since the Apostle Paul earlier converted Philemon to the True Faith, he reconciled the two of them, Philemon and Onesimus, master and slave, writing a special epistle to Philemon. It is one of the most emotional compositions which exists in Holy Scripture. *"I urge you on behalf of my child Onesimus, whose father I have become in my imprisonment. Perhaps this is why he was away from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a brother, beloved especially to me"* (Philemon 1:10,15,16). Moved by this letter Philemon, indeed, received Onesimus as a brother freeing him from slavery.

Later, Onesimus was consecrated a bishop by the apostles themselves and accepted the episcopal throne at Ephesus following the Apostle Timothy. This is evident from the Epistle of Ignatius the God-bearer [Theophorus]. At the time of Trajan's persecution, Onesimus, already an old man, was arrested and brought to Rome. In Rome, Onesimus gave an accounting of himself before judge Tertycus, was imprisoned and finally beheaded. A wealthy woman removed his body, placed it in a silver arcophagus and buried it honorably in the year 109 A.D.

THE HOLY APOSTLE ONESIMUS

*Kontakion*

On this day Thou hast

appeared; Thou didst shine

upon the world as a bright

sunbeam, shining with the

rays of Paul, the sun of

THE HOLY APOSTLE ONESIMUS

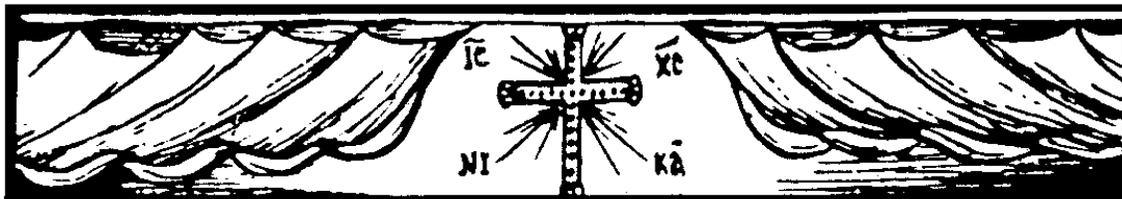
most resplendent light,

who hath enlightened the

world entire. Thus, we all

honour thee, blessed

Onesimus.



## The Holy Apostle Hermas

May 31<sup>st</sup>

Hermas was one of the Seventy Apostles. He is mentioned in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. "*Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes and the brethren which are with them*" (Romans 16:14). Hermas was a Greek by birth but lived in Rome for a long time. He was a bishop in Philippoupolis and ended his life as a martyr. He compiled a very instructive book called "The Shepherd" according to revelations from an angel of God. Hermas was a wealthy man but because of his sins and the sins of his sons, he fell into extreme poverty. Once while in prayer, a man appeared to him in white raiment with a staff in his hand and told him that he is an angel of repentance who was sent to be with him until the end of his life. The angel gave him twelve mandates:

1. Believe in God;
2. To live in simplicity and innocence; do not speak evil and give alms to all who beg;
3. Love truth and avoid falsehood;
4. Preserve chastity in your thoughts;
5. Learn patience and generosity;
6. To know that with every man, there is a good and an evil spirit;
7. To fear God and not to fear the devil;
8. To do every good and to refrain from every evil deed;
9. To pray to God from the depth of the soul with faith that our prayer will be fulfilled;
10. To guard against melancholy as the sister of doubt and anger;
11. To question true and false prophecies;
12. To guard against every evil desire.

THE HOLY APOSTLE HERMAS

*Troparion of All Saints*

Throughout the world

Thy Church, O Lord, is

adorned with the blood

of Thy Martyrs, as

with purple and fine

THE HOLY APOSTLE HERMAS

linen. Through them she

cries unto Thee, O

Christ. Send down Thy

bounties upon Thy people:

grant peace to Thine estate

THE HOLY APOSTLE HERMAS

and upon our souls the Great

Mercy.

# The Holy First Martyr Thecla, Equal To The Apostles

September 24<sup>th</sup>



Thecla was born in Iconium of eminent but pagan parents. As a girl of eighteen, she was betrothed to a young man at the same time that the Apostle Paul arrived in Iconium with Barnabas to preach the Gospel. Hearing Paul's testimony for three days and nights, Thecla converted to the Christian Faith, and vowed to live in virginity. Her mother, seeing that she was now ignoring her betrothed and no longer thought of marriage, tried to dissuade her, and then beat her and tortured her by starvation. Finally, this wicked mother turned Thecla over to the judge and demanded that Thecla be burned. The judge threw her into the fire, but God preserved her unharmed. Then, Thecla followed the Apostle Paul, and went to Antioch with him. Attracted by Thecla's external beauty, a certain elder of the city wanted to take her for

himself by force, but Thecla escaped his grasp. The pagan elder accused her to the eparch as a Christian who disdained marriage. The eparch condemned her to death, and had her thrown to wild beasts, but the wild beasts did not touch the body of this holy virgin. Amazed by this, the eparch asked her: "Who are you and what kind of power is in you, that nothing can harm you?" Thecla replied: "I am a servant of the Living God." The eparch then released her, and she departed to preach the Gospel. She succeeded in converting many to the true Faith, among whom was Tryphena, a prominent and honorable widow. Then, having received the blessing of the Apostle Paul to do so, Thecla withdrew to a secluded place near Seleucia. There she lived a life of asceticism for a long time and, by healing the sick with wonderworking power, she converted many to Christianity. The doctors and soothsayers in Seleucia were envious of her, and sent some young men to defile her, hoping that the loss of her virginity would also mean the loss of her miraculous power. Thecla fled from these arrogant young men, but as they were about to catch her, she prayed to God for help. A large rock opened up and hid this holy virgin and bride of Christ. This rock was her refuge and her tomb. St. John Chrysostom says of this wonderful Christian heroine and saint: "It seems to me that as I see this blessed virgin, in one hand she offers Christ virginity, and in the other, martyrdom."

THE HOLY FIRST MARTYR THECLA, EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES

*Troparion*

O Lord Jesus, unto Thee

Thy lamb doth cry with

a great voice: O my

Bridegroom, Thee I love:

and seeking Thee, I now

THE HOLY MARTYR THECLA, EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES

confest, and with Thy

baptism am crucified and

buried. I suffer for Thy

sake, that I may reign

with Thee; for Thy sake

THE HOLY MARTYR THECLA, EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES

I die, that I may live in

Thee: accept me offered

out of longing to Thee as

a spotless sacrifice. Lord,

save our souls through

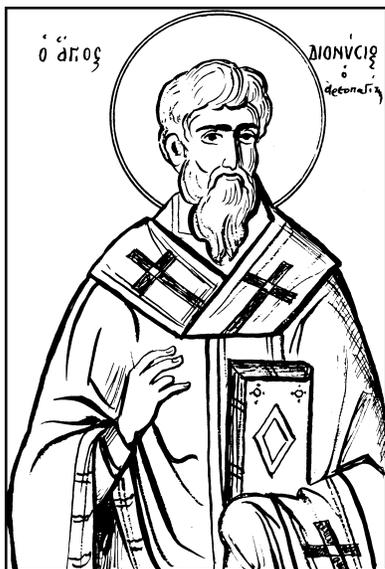
THE HOLY MARTYR THECLA, EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES

her intercessions, since

Thou art great in mercy.

# The Holy Hieromartyr Dionysius The Areopagite

October 3<sup>rd</sup>



Dionysius is numbered among the Seventy Lesser Apostles. This wonderful man was the scion of a distinguished pagan family in Athens. Having completed the school of philosophy in Athens, he went to Egypt to study further. While he was there the Lord Christ died on the Cross, the sun was darkened, and there was darkness in Egypt for three hours. Then Dionysius cried out: “Either God the Creator of the world is suffering, or this world is coming to an end.” Returning to Athens, he married a woman named Damaris and had sons by her. He became a member of the highest court among the Greeks, the Areopagus, and thereafter he was known as the “Areopagite.” When the Apostle Paul preached the Gospel in Athens, Dionysius was baptized with his entire household. Paul consecrated

him Bishop of Athens. He left his wife, children and his position for the love of Christ. He traveled with Paul for a long time and met all the other apostles of Christ. He traveled to Jerusalem especially to see the Most-holy Theotokos, and described his encounter with her in one of his written works. He was present at the burial of the Holy and Most-pure One. When his teacher, St. Paul, suffered martyrdom, Dionysius also desired such a death for himself, and went to Gaul, with his presbyter Rusticus and the deacon Eleutherius, to preach the Gospel among the barbarians. He suffered much but also succeeded much. By his labors many pagans were converted to the Christian Faith. Dionysius built a small church in Paris, where he celebrated the divine services.\* When he was ninety years old, he, Rusticus and Eleutherius were seized and tortured for Christ; then all three were beheaded. The severed head of St. Dionysius rolled a long distance, to the feet of Catula, a Christian, who honorably buried it with his body. Dionysius suffered during the reign of Dometian in the year 96. He wrote several famous works: on the Divine Names of God, on the Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchies, on Mystical Theology, and on the Most-holy Theotokos.

\*Some historians believe that Dionysius [Denise] of Paris was someone other than Dionysius the Areopagite.

THE HOLY DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

*Kontakion*

In spirit, thou didst pass

through Heaven's gates,

instructed by the great

Apostle who attained to

the third Heaven's

THE HOLY DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

heights, and was made

rich in all knowledge of

things beyond speech; and

then thou, O Dionysius,

didst illuminate them that

THE HOLY DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

slumbered in the darkness

of their ignorance.

Hence, we all cry out:

Rejoice, O universal Father.



## The Hieromartyr Ignatius, The God-Bearer Of Antioch December 20<sup>th</sup>

This holy man is called “the God-bearer” because he constantly bore the name of the Living God in his heart and on his lips. According to tradition, he was thus named because he was held in the arms of God Incarnate, Jesus Christ. On a day when the Lord was teaching His disciples humility, He took a child and placed him among them, saying; *“Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven”* (Matthew 18:4). This child was Ignatius. Later, Ignatius was a disciple of St. John the Theologian, together with Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. As Bishop of Antioch, Ignatius governed the Church of God as a good shepherd and was the first to introduce antiphonal chanting in the Church, in which two choirs alternate the chanting. This manner of chanting was revealed to St. Ignatius by the angels in heaven. When Emperor Trajan was passing through Antioch on his way to do battle with the Persians, he heard of Ignatius, summoned him and counseled him to offer sacrifice to the idols. If Ignatius would do so, Trajan would bestow upon him the rank of senator. As the counsels and threats of the emperor were in vain, St. Ignatius was shackled in irons and sent to Rome in the company of ten merciless soldiers, to be thrown to the wild beasts. Ignatius rejoiced in suffering for his Lord, only praying to God that the wild beasts would become the tomb for his body and that no one would prevent him from his death. After a long and difficult journey from Asia through Thrace, Macedonia and Epirus, Ignatius arrived in Rome where he was thrown to the lions in the circus. The lions tore him to pieces and devoured him, leaving only several of the larger bones and his heart. This glorious lover of the Lord Christ suffered in the year 106 in Rome at the time of the Christ-hating emperor Trajan. Ignatius has appeared many times from the other world and worked miracles, even to this day helping all who call upon him for help.

THE HIEROMARTYR IGNATIUS, THE GOD-BEARER

*Troparion*

○ Holy Hieromartyr

Ignatius, you lent

yourself to the

apostles' way of life and

succeeded them on their

THE HIEROMARTYR IGNATIUS, THE GOD-BEARER

throne. Inspired by God

found the way to

contemplation through

practice and prayer:

wherefore you became a

THE HIEROMARTYR IGNATIUS, THE GOD-BEARER

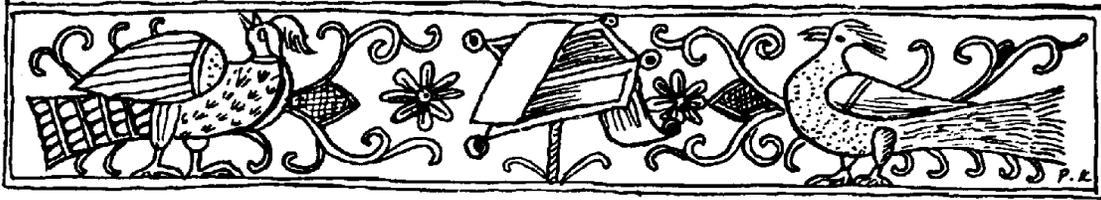
perfect teacher of truth.

fighting for the faith unto

the shedding of your blood.

Intercede with Christ God

that He may save our souls.



## The Holy Great Martyr Eustathius (Placidus)

September 20<sup>th</sup>

Eustathius was a great Roman general during the reigns of Emperors Titus and Trajan. Though he was a pagan, Placidus (for that was his pagan name) was a just and merciful man, similar to Cornelius the Centurion, who was baptized by the Apostle Peter (Acts 10). Out hunting one day, he pursued a stag. By God's providence, a cross appeared between the antlers of the stag and the voice of the Lord came to Placidus, directing him to go to a Christian priest and become baptized. Placidus was baptized, along with his wife and two sons. At baptism, he received the name Eustathius; his wife, Theopiste ("faithful to God"); and his sons, Agapitus and Theopistus. After his baptism, he returned to the place where he had experienced the revelation of the stag and, kneeling, gave thanks to God that He had brought him to the truth. Just then, the voice of the Lord again manifested itself to him, foretold that he would suffer for His name, and strengthened him. Then Eustathius secretly left Rome and with his family, intending to hide among the simple people and serve God in humble and unknown surroundings. Arriving in Egypt, he was immediately beset by trials. An evil barbarian abducted his wife, and both of his sons were seized by wild beasts and carried away. However, the barbarian soon lost his life, and the children were saved from the wild beasts by shepherds. Eustathius settled in the Egyptian village of Vadisis and lived there for fifteen years as a hired laborer. Then barbarians attacked the Roman Empire, and Emperor Trajan grieved that he did not have the brave General Placidus, who had carried the victory whenever he fought. The emperor sent two of his officers to seek the great commander throughout the empire. By God's providence, these officers (who were once companions of Eustathius), came to the village of Vadisis, found Eustathius and brought him back to the emperor. Eustathius amassed an army and defeated the barbarians. On the way back to Rome, Eustathius found his wife and both sons. Meanwhile, Emperor Trajan had died and Emperor Hadrian was on the throne. When Hadrian summoned General Eustathius to offer sacrifices to the gods, Eustathius declined, declaring himself a Christian. The emperor subjected him and his wife and sons to torture. They were thrown to the wild beasts, but this did them no harm. Then they were cast into a red-hot metal ox. On the third day their dead bodies were removed, but they were unharmed by the fire. Thus, this glorious commander rendered "*unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's*" (Luke 20:25), and took up his habitation in the Eternal Kingdom of Christ our God.

THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR EUSTATHIUS

*Kontakion*

Thou didst follow

Christ's Passion,

Eustathius, and willingly

drank His chalice. Thou

art also fellow-heir to

THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR EUSTATHIUS

His glory and hast

received from Him

heavenly power.

*The Holy Martyrs Vera, Nada And Lubov  
(Faith, Hope And Love),  
And Their Mother Sophia  
September 17<sup>th</sup>*



They all lived and suffered in Rome during the reign of Emperor Hadrian. Sophia was wise, as her name implies. She was left a widow, and had established herself and her daughters well in the Christian Faith. When the persecuting hand of Hadrian extended even over the virtuous home of Sophia, Vera was only twelve years old; Nada, ten years old; and Lubov, nine years old. Brought before the emperor, these four held each other's hands "like a woven wreath," humbly but steadfastly confessed their faith in Christ the Lord and refused to offer sacrifices to the pagan idol Artemis. Before their suffering, the mother encouraged her daughters to endure to the end: "Your heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, is eternal health, inexpressible beauty and eternal life. When your bodies are slain by torture, He will clothe you in incorruption and the wounds

on your bodies will shine in the heavens as stars." One by one the torturers inflicted cruel torments, first on Vera, then on Nada, and then on Lubov. They beat them, slashed them, cast them into fire and boiling pitch, and finally beheaded them with the sword one after another. Sophia took the dead bodies of her daughters outside the town and honorably buried them. She remained at their grave for three days and three nights, praying to God. Then she gave her spirit to God, flying off to Paradise, where the blessed souls of her glorious daughters awaited her.

THE HOLY MARTYRS VERA, NADA, AND LUBOV  
AND THEIR MOTHER SOPHIA

*Kontakion*

Since Faith and Hope and

Love were in truth sacred

branches of venerable

Sophia, the namesake of

wisdom, by grace they

THE HOLY MARTYRS VERA, NADA, AND LUBOV  
AND THEIR MOTHER SOPHIA

have shown all men that

Greek wisdom is

foolishness, and in contest

they proved to be

prizewinning victors:

THE HOLY MARTYRS VERA, NADA, AND LUBOV  
AND THEIR MOTHER SOPHIA

wherefore, they received a

crown that shall never

perish from Christ God,

the Lord of all.

# The Venerable Female Martyr Parasceva

July 26<sup>th</sup>



Parasceva was born in Rome of Christian parents and from her youth was instructed in the Faith of Christ. With great fervence, St. Parasceva endeavored to fulfill all the commandments of God in her life. Believing strongly and living according to her faith, Parasceva directed others on the path [of salvation] with the help of the True Faith and pious living. When her parents died Parasceva distributed all of her property to the poor and was tonsured a nun. As a nun she preached the Faith of Christ with an even greater zeal, not hiding from anyone, even though at that time the Roman authorities bloodily persecuted the Faith of Christ. First the pernicious Jews accused St. Parasceva of preaching the prohibited Faith. She was brought to trial before Emperor Antoninus. All the flatteries of the emperor did not help in the least to cause her to

waver in the Faith. They then subjected her to fiery torments and placed a red-hot helmet on her head. The Lord miraculously saved her and Parasceva was delivered and left Rome. She again traveled from city to city to convert the pagan people there to the True Faith. In two more cities she was brought before princes and judges and was tortured for her Lord, at the same time working great miracles and by the power of God quickly recuperated from her pains and wounds. The pagans, as always, ascribed her miracles to magic and her power of recovery to the mercy of their gods. St. Parasceva once said to the prince who tortured her: "It is not your gods, O prince, who healed me but my Christ the True God." Finally Prince Tarasius beheaded her. Thus this saint gloriously ended her fruitful life. Her relics were later translated to Constantinople. She suffered honorably for Christ in the second century.

THE VENERABLE FEMALE MARTYR PARASCEVA

*Kontakion*

Thy church has become a

place of healing for our

souls, where we the

faithful praise and

honour thee, O modest

THE VENERABLE FEMALE MARTYR PARASCEVA

one, renowned and

righteous Martyr

Parasceva.



## *The Holy Female Martyr Felicitas And Her Seven Sons*

*January 25<sup>th</sup>*

As a Christian, Felicitas was condemned to death along with her seven sons during the reign of Emperor Antoninus in the year 164 A.D. She implored God only that she not to be killed before her sons, so that she might be able to encourage them during their torture and death in order that they would not deny Christ. According to God's Providence, it so happened. With joy, this superb mother accompanied her sons one by one until she had witnessed the death of all seven sons. Then, she herself, with gratitude to God, received a martyr's death. She and her sons suffered in Rome where their relics repose.

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR FELICITAS AND HER SEVEN SONS

*Troparion*

Truly thou art blessed, O

holy Felicitas, for thou

didst never doubt the

mercy of Christ our God,

and in spite of all

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR FELICITAS AND HER SEVEN SONS

temptations, with thy

seven sons thou didst

rejoice to return to Him

rather than to languish in

dishonour on earth.

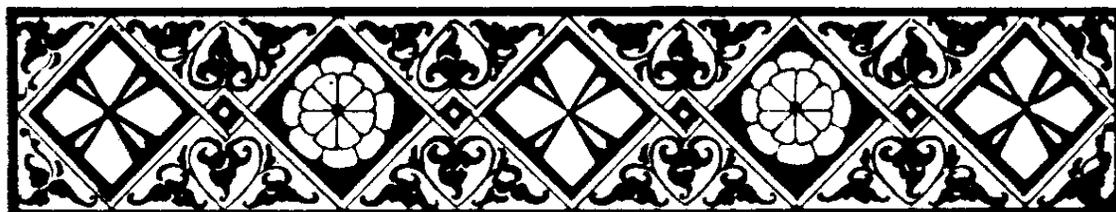
THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR FELICITAS AND HER SEVEN SONS

Wherefore pray for us

that we may follow thy

example for the salvation

of our souls.



## *The Holy Martyr Justin The Philosopher*

*June 1<sup>st</sup>*

Justin was born of Greek parents in the Samaritan town of Shechem, later called Nablus one hundred-five years after Christ. He zealously sought wisdom among philosophers, at first with the Stoics and after that with the Peripatetics, the Pythagorians and finally with the Platonists. Even though Plato's philosophy did not satisfy him, nevertheless, he adhered to it the longest time not having anything else that would attract him more. By God's Providence an honorable elder encountered Justin who confused him concerning the philosophy of Plato and persuaded him that men cannot know the truth about God unless God reveals it and God revealed the truth about Himself in the books of Holy Scripture. Justin began to read Holy Scripture and became a thoroughly convinced Christian. However, he did not want to be baptized nor to be called a Christian until he was personally convinced of the falseness of all those accusations which the pagans raised against the Christians. Coming to Rome in a philosopher's dolman [cape], he quickly achieved great respect there as well as many followers. He was present at the martyrdom of St. Ptolemy and St. Lucian. Witnessing the tortures of innocent Christians, Justin wrote an Apologia (Defense) of Christians and Christian teachings and presented it to the Emperor Antoninus and to the Senate. The emperor read the Apologia with care and ordered the persecution of Christians to cease. Justin took a copy of the emperor's decree and, with it, journeyed to Asia where, with the help of this decree, saved many persecuted Christians. After that he again returned to Rome. When a persecution began under Emperor Marcus Aurelius, he wrote another Apologia and sent it to the emperor. A disreputable philosopher Crescens, a Cynic, out of envy accused him of being a Christian because Justin had always overcome him in all debates and Justin found himself in prison. Desiring the death of Justin and fearing that he [Justin] would somehow justify himself before the court, Crescens seized the opportunity and somehow poisoned Justin in prison. So ended the earthly life of this great defender of the Christian Faith who took up habitation in blessed eternity in the year 166 A.D.

THE HOLY MARTYR JUSTIN THE PHILOSOPHER

*Troparion*

○ Justin, teacher of

divine knowledge, thou

didst shine with the rays

of true philosophy and

wast wisely armed against

THE HOLY MARTYR JUSTIN THE PHILOSOPHER

the enemy. Confessing the

truth thou didst contend

with the martyrs: with

them ever entreat Christ

our God to save our souls.



## *The Holy Martyr Hermeas*

*May 31st*

Hermeas grew old as an imperial soldier and in his old age suffered for Christ the King. Since the evil judge tried in vain to dissuade him from the Faith of Christ and counseling him to offer sacrifices to the idols, the judge then gave orders that his teeth be knocked out with a stone and the skin peeled from his face with a knife. After that they threw him into a fiery furnace but, by the Grace of God, he was saved and stood up. Following that, by order of the judge he drank a bitter poison which was given to him by a magician, but the poison did him no harm. Witnessing this, the magician was so amazed that he openly confessed Christ for which he was immediately beheaded. Afterwards, they gouged out both of Hermeas' eyes but he did not grieve and cried out to the judge: "Take for yourself these bodily eyes that gaze upon the vanity of the world. I have eyes of the heart by which I clearly see the light of the truth." He was hung then by the feet upside down and those who did this to him were blinded and staggered around him. St. Hermeas beckoned them to come to him, laid his hands on them and, by prayer to the Lord, restored their sight. Witnessing all of this, the judge became as enraged as a lion, drew a knife and severed the head of this godly-man. Christians secretly removed the body of Hermeas and honorably buried it. His relics gave healing to all the sick and to the afflicted. St. Hermeas suffered in the year 166 A.D., during the reign of Emperor Antoninus.

THE HOLY MARTYR HERMEAS

*Kontakion*

Thou didst steadfastly

confess the Name of

Christ and endure

grievous torments. O

Hermias, and vanquish

THE HOLY MARTYR HERMEAS

the ancient foe. With an

aged body, in thy

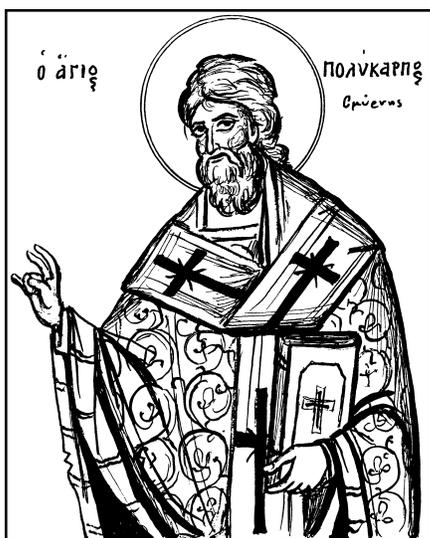
youthful ardour thou

didst attain to the joys

of Paradise.

# The Holy Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop Of Smyrna

February 23<sup>rd</sup>



Polycarp, this great apostolic man, was born a pagan. St. John the Theologian converted him to the Faith of Christ and baptized him. In his childhood, Polycarp became an orphan and according to a vision in a dream Callista, a noble widow, took him as her own son, raised and educated him. From his childhood Polycarp was devout and compassionate. He strove to emulate the life of St. Bucolus, then the Bishop of Smyrna, as well as the holy Apostles John and Paul, whom he knew and heard. St. Bucolus ordained him a presbyter and before his death, Bucolus designated him as his successor in Smyrna. The apostolic bishops, who gathered at the funeral of Bucolus, consecrated Polycarp as bishop. From the very beginning, Polycarp was

gifted with the power of working miracles. He expelled an evil spirit from the servant of a prince and through prayer stopped a terrible fire in Smyrna. Upon seeing this, many pagans regarded Polycarp as one of the gods. He brought down rain in times of drought, healed illnesses, discerned, prophesized and so forth. He suffered during the reign of Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Three days before his death, St. Polycarp prophesized: "In three days, I will be burned in fire for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ!" And on the third day when the soldiers arrested him and brought him to trial, he cried out: "Let this be the will of the Lord my God." When the judge counseled him to deny Christ and to acknowledge the Roman gods, Polycarp said: "I cannot exchange the better for the worse!" The Jews especially hated Polycarp and endeavored to have Polycarp burned alive. When they placed him bound at the stake, he prayed to God for a long while. He was very old, grey and radiant as an angel. The people witnessed how the flame encircled him but did not touch him. Frightened by such a phenomenon, the pagan judges ordered the executioner to pierce him with a lance through the fire. When he was pierced, so much blood flowed from him that the entire fire was extinguished, and his body remained whole and unburned. At the persuasion of the Jews, the judge ordered Polycarp's lifeless body be incinerated according to the custom of the Hellenes. So the evil ones burned the dead body of the lifeless one whom they could not burn while alive. St. Polycarp suffered on Great and Holy Saturday in the year 167 A.D.

THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR POLYCARP

*Troparion*

As a sharer of the ways

and a successor to the

throne of the Apostles,

O inspired of God, thou

foundest discipline to be

THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR POLYCARP

a means of ascent to

divine vision. Wherefore,

having rightly divided the

word of truth, thou

didst also contest for

THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR POLYCARP

With the Faith even unto blood

O Hieromartyr Polycarp.

Intercede with Christ

our God that our souls

be saved.



## *The Priestly-Martyr Pothinus, Bishop Of Lyons August 23<sup>rd</sup>*

Pothinus was sent by St. Polycarp from Asia Minor to preach in Gaul [France]. He became the first bishop of Lyons and converted many pagans to Christianity. During the time of the persecution of the Christians in the year 177A.D., Pothinus was brought to trial: more correctly, he was carried [in the arms of others] for he was ninety years old. The Pro-consul asked him: "Who is the Christian God?" The aged Pothinus replied: "You will know if you become worthy of that." The pagans attacked him with canes and stones and beat him without mercy. Thrown into prison, St. Pothinus died from the beatings two days later and took up habitation in the Kingdom of Heaven.

## *The Priestly-Martyr Irenaeus, Bishop Of Lyons August 23<sup>rd</sup>*

In his youth, Irenaeus was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of the apostles, who sent him to preach in Gaul. Following the martyrdom of St. Pothinus, Irenaeus was installed as bishop. In his countless writings, Irenaeus at times defined the Orthodox Faith and, again at times, he defended it from heretics. Irenaeus was martyred and died for Christ at the time of Emperor Severus in the year 202 A.D. along with many thousands of Christians (19,000).

THE PRIESTLY MARTYR IRENAEUS

*Troparion*

Let us praise Irenaeus,

the hierarch of the Lord,

the Holy Spirit's pure

vessel and radiant star of

Lyons; for he kept the

THE PRIESTLY MARTYR IRENAEUS

holy Faith free from all

heresy by his divinely

written books, which still

guide the Church of

Christ into that most

## THE PRIESTLY MARTYR IRENAEUS

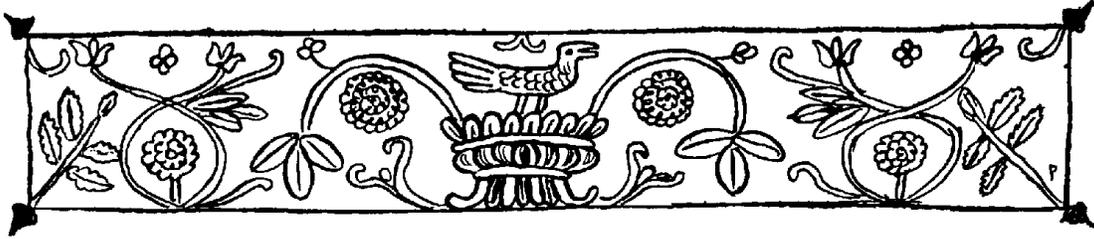
peaceful haven.

Wherefore, now crowned

as a Martyr, he

intercedeth that our

souls be saved.



## *The Holy Female Martyrs Perpetua And Felicitas; The Holy Martyr Satyrus And Others With Them*

*February 1<sup>st</sup>*

As Christians, they were all cast into prison during the reign of Emperor Septimus Severus. Saint Perpetua, who was of noble birth, encouraged all the other prisoners not to be afraid to suffer for Christ. In a dream, Perpetua saw a ladder imbedded with sharp knives, swords, spears, fishhooks, nails and other death-bearing instruments extending from heaven to earth. At the bottom of the ladder there lay a loathsome serpent. She saw how Satyrus ran up to the top of the ladder first, unharmed, and from the top cried out to Perpetua: "Perpetua, I am waiting for you; come, but be careful of the serpent!" Encouraged by this, Perpetua stood on the head of the serpent as on the first rung of the ladder and, step by step, quickly raced to the top. When she reached the top, Perpetua entered into heaven and saw the most beautiful mansions of heaven and was very ecstatic. When she related her dream, all the prisoners interpreted that imminent death soon faced them, the first of them being Satyrus, which shortly came true. Satyrus was slain first, then Perpetua and all others one by one. As lambs slain for Christ the Lamb of God, they received from Christ, the eternal reward in the kingdom of Light. They all suffered for Christ between the years 202-203 A.D.

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYRS PERPETUA AND FELICITAS

*Kontakion*

Your lambs, Perpetua and

Felicity, cry out to you,

○ Jesus, with great love.

"○ our Bridegroom, we

long for you in great

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYRS PERPETUA AND FELICITAS

pain, we are crucified

with you, and in baptism

we are buried with you.

We suffer for your sake

in order to reign with

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYRS PERPETUA AND FELICITAS

you. We die for you in

order to live in you.

Accept us as immaculate

victims, since we are slain

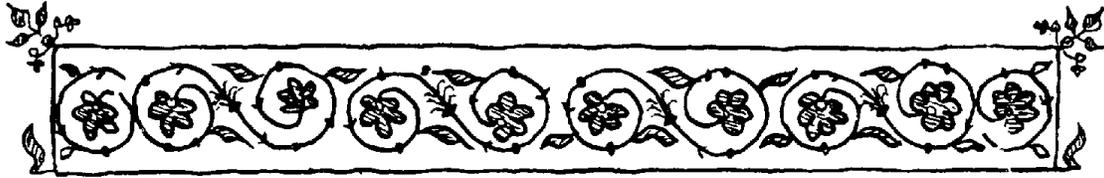
for your sake." Through

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYRS PERPETUA AND FELICITAS

their intercessions, O

Merciful One, save our

souls!



## *Saint Papius Of Hierapolis*

*February 22<sup>nd</sup>*

Papius was a disciple of the holy apostles and a patristic author. From Papius we have testimony concerning the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, the four Marys, and the brothers of the Lord, as well as an incomplete but preserved manuscript, "*An Interpretation of the Words of Our Lord.*"

## *The Holy Martyr Pionius*

*March 11<sup>th</sup>*

Pionius was priest from Syria. He suffered in Smyrna during the time of persecution under Decius. He was condemned to be crucified, for which he was exceedingly glad. As soon as the soldiers formed a cross and laid it upon the ground, Pionius freely lay on the cross, stretched out his arms and ordered the soldiers to nail him in the hands with spikes. The cross was inserted in the ground upside down and a fire was ignited under the head of the martyr. Many people gathered around. Pionius closed his eyes and prayed to God within himself. The flames of the fire did not even catch the hairs of his head on fire. When, at last, the fire was extinguished and when everyone thought that Pionius was dead, he opened his eyes and cried out rejoicing, "O God, receive my soul," and expired. This saint wrote "The Life of St. Polycarp of Smyrna," with whom he rejoices in the Kingdom of Christ. He suffered and was glorified in the year 250 A.D.

THE HOLY MARTYR PIONIUS

*Troparion Of The Martyrs*

Thy Martyrs, O Lord, in

their courageous contest

for Thee received as the

prize the crowns of

incorruption and life

THE HOLY MARTYR PIONIUS

from Thee, our immortal

God. For since they

possessed Thy strength,

they cast down the

Tyrants and wholly

THE HOLY MARTYR PIONIUS

destroyed the demons'

strengthless presumption.

O Christ God, by their

prayers, save our souls,

since Thou art merciful.

# The Holy Hieromartyr Babylas

September 4<sup>th</sup>



This “great and wonderful man, if he could be called a man”—as St. John Chrysostom spoke of him—was Bishop of Antioch during the reign of the wicked Emperor Numerian. This Numerian concluded a peace treaty with a barbarian king, who was more noble and peace-loving than he. As a sign of his sincere desire for a lasting peace, the barbarian king gave his young son to be brought up and educated in Numerian’s court. One day Numerian stabbed this innocent boy to death with his own hands, and offered him as a sacrifice to the idols. Still hot from the crime and the innocent blood, this criminal with an emperor’s crown went to a Christian church to see what was going on there. St. Babylas was at prayer with the people, and heard that the emperor had come with his retinue and desired to enter the church. Babylas interrupted the service, went out in

front of the church, and told the emperor that as he was an idolater he could not enter the holy temple where the one, true God was glorified. In a homily about Babylas, St. John Chrysostom said: “Who else in the world would fear—he who, with such authority, repulsed the emperor? ... By this, he taught emperors not to overreach their authority beyond the measure given to them by God, and he also showed the clergy how to use their own authority.” The shamed emperor turned back, but planned revenge. The following day, he summoned Babylas and berated him, urging him to offer sacrifice to idols, which, of course, the saint steadfastly refused to do. The emperor then bound Babylas and cast him into prison. The emperor also tortured three children: Urban, age twelve, Prilidian, age nine, and Hippolinus, age seven. Babylas was their spiritual father and teacher, and they, out of love for him, had not run away. They were the sons of Christodula, an honorable Christian woman who had herself suffered for Christ. The emperor first ordered that each child be beaten with a number of blows corresponding to his years, and then had them cast into prison. He finally had all three beheaded with the sword. The chained Babylas was present at the beheading of the children and encouraged them. After that, he laid his own honorable head under the sword. He was buried in his chains by the Christians, in the same grave as those three wondrous children, as he had willed before his martyrdom. Their holy souls flew off to their heavenly habitation, while their miracle-working relics remained for the benefit of the faithful, as a constant witness to their heroism in the Faith. They suffered in about the year 250.

THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR BABYLAS

*Kontakion*

Thou didst treasure in

thine heart the mysteries

of the faith without

fearing the tyrant. O

Hieromartyr Babylas,

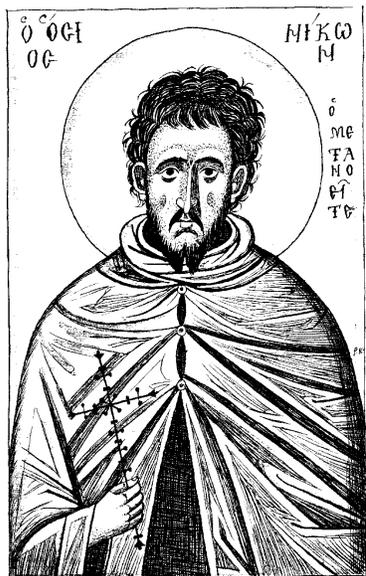
THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR BABYLAS

servant of Christ,

preserve us.

# The Holy Priestly-Martyr Nikon

March 23<sup>rd</sup>



Nicon was born in Naples of a pagan father and Christian mother. Nicon was a Roman officer in Naples and was not baptized, even though his mother tutored him secretly from his father in the Faith of Christ. Once, when Nicon was sent into battle with his troops, his mother counseled him to make the sign of the cross and to call upon Christ for help if any misfortune would befall him. And, indeed, while in battle, Nicon's troops were completely surrounded; and, toward the end of the battle, Nicon made the sign of the cross in his heart and cried out to Christ. Immediately, he was filled with unusual strength and pursued his enemies. Some he slew and others he forced to flee. Returning to his home, Nicon continuously cried out in amazement, "Great is the Christian God." Since he had made his mother happy

with the news of his victory with the help of the Cross of Christ, he secretly sailed to Asia where Theodosius the Bishop of Cyzicus baptized him. Following his baptism, he secluded himself in a monastery where he devoted himself to study and asceticism. Before his death Theodosius had a vision in which he was told to ordain Nicon as his successor. Immediately the aged Theodosius summoned Nicon and ordained him a deacon; after that, a priest, and then, a bishop. Shortly thereafter, according to God's Providence, Nicon came to Naples where he discovered that his mother was still living. Following his mother's death, Nicon, with nine disciples, his former war companions, withdrew to Sicily and there dedicated himself to preaching the Gospel. However, at that time there was a terrible persecution of Christians. Prince Quintianus captured Nicon with his companions and inflicted great pain and suffering upon them. His one-hundred ninety disciples and companions were beheaded. The tormentor tied Nicon to the tail of a horse, hurled him from a steep wall into a gorge, beat him, and skinned him; but Nicon survived all of these tortures. Finally, he was beheaded and took up habitation with the Lord. His body was left in the fields to be devoured by the birds. A certain herdsman, with a rabid evil spirit, tripped and fell over the dead body of Christ's martyr and immediately the herdsman was healed. Proclaiming the news about Nicon's body, Christians came forth and honorably buried the body of Nicon. St. Nicon suffered during the reign of the Emperor Decius.

THE HOLY PRIESTLY-MARTYR NICON

*Troparion*

O God of our Fathers,

ever dealing with us

according to Thy

gentleness: take not Thy

mercy from us, but by

THE HOLY PRIESTLY-MARTYR NICON

their entreaties guide

our life in peace.

# Our Holy Mother, Anastasia The Roman

October 29<sup>th</sup>



She was born in Rome of noble parents and was left an orphan at the age of three. As an orphan, she was taken to a convent near Rome where the abbess was Sophia, a nun of the highest level of perfection. After seventeen years, Anastasia was well known—among the Christians as a great ascetic, and among the pagans as a rare beauty. Probus, the pagan governor, heard of Anastasia and sent his soldiers to bring her to him. For two hours, the good Abbess Sophia counseled Anastasia how to keep the Faith, how to resist flattering deceits, and how to endure torture. Anastasia said to her: “My heart is ready to suffer for Christ; my soul is ready to die for my Sweet Jesus.” Brought before the governor, Anastasia openly expressed her faith in Christ the Lord, and when the governor tried

to turn her away from the Faith—first by promises and then by threats—the martyr said to him: “I am ready to die for my Lord not only once, but—oh, if it were only possible—a hundred times!” When they stripped her naked to humiliate her, she cried out to the servants: “Whip me, cut me up and tear me apart, cover my naked body with wounds and cover my shame with blood!” She was beaten, torn and cut up. On two occasions she felt a great thirst and asked for water, and a Christian, Cyril, gave her a drink, for which he was blessed by the martyr of Christ and beheaded by the pagans. Anastasia’s breasts and tongue were severed, but an angel of God appeared and sustained her. Finally, she was beheaded outside the city. Blessed Sophia found her body and buried it honorably. Anastasia was crowned with the wreath of martyrdom during the reign of Decius.

OUR HOLY MOTHER, ANASTASIA THE ROMAN

*Kontakion*

Made most pure, ○

righteous one, with chaste

virginity's waters, and

washed in martyric blood,

○ Anastasia, thou

OUR HOLY MOTHER, ANASTASIA THE ROMAN

granted unto those in

need the healing of every

illness, and to those who

come with love thou

granted salvation; for

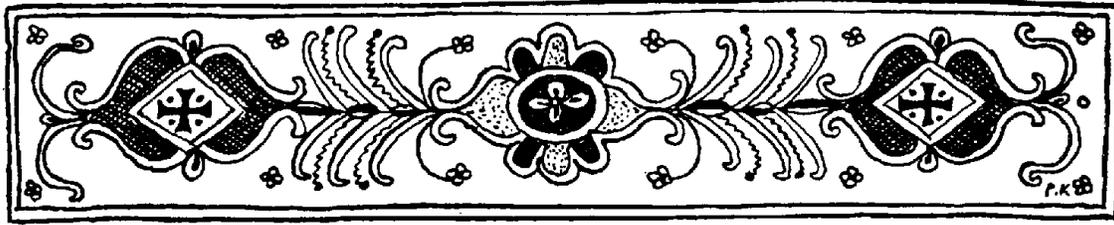
OUR HOLY MOTHER, ANASTASIA THE ROMAN

the well-spring of

unfailing grace, even

Christ God, bestoweth

power on thee.



## *The Holy Martyr Codratus Of Corinth And Others With Him*

*March 10<sup>th</sup>*

During the time of the persecution of Christians, many of the faithful fled to the mountains and into the caves. So did the mother of Codratus. She was pregnant at the time and gave birth to Codratus in the forest and died shortly thereafter. Codratus was cared for by, fed by and guided by Divine Providence and by his Guardian Angel. Codratus grew up in nature and in solitude. He, who gave manna from heaven to the Israelites in the wilderness, dropped from the clouds a sweet dew on the mouth of the child Codratus. When he was twelve years old, he entered into town and there some benevolent men took a liking to him and provided him with an education. He studied medicine and healed the sick, as much with natural cures and even more by the power of the spirit and prayer, which he was accustomed to since his childhood. When a new persecution arose again under Decius, Codratus was brought to trial and cast into prison. Five companions joined him and confessed the name of Christ. They were Cyprian, Dionysius, Anectus, Paul and Crescens. They were all dragged through the streets by the pagans, especially by their children. They were beaten with rods and stoned until they were eventually dragged to the scaffold. There, the martyrs prayed to God and were beheaded. On this spot a source of water gushed out of the ground which is still called Codratus even today and is a reminder of the heroic deaths of these six holy innocents for Christ. They honorably suffered for the truth in the year 250 A.D. in Corinth during the reign of Emperor Decius and his governor, Jason.

THE HOLY MARTYR CODRATUS OF CORINTH

*Kontakion*

When you contested

bravely in Corinth, O

wise Martyrs, you

appeared as lamps of six

lights; you ever illumine

THE HOLY MARTYR CODRATUS OF CORINTH

the way for Christ's

faithful by the grace

that was given to you.

# The Holy Female Martyr Agatha

February 5<sup>th</sup>



Agatha, this glorious virgin and martyr for Christ, was born in the Sicilian town of Palermo of noble and wealthy parents. When Emperor Decius began a persecution against Christians, St. Agatha was arrested and brought to trial before Judge Quintian. The judge, seeing Agatha beautiful in countenance, desired to have her for his wife. When he suggested this, Agatha answered that she is the bride of Christ and cannot be unfaithful to her Betrothed. Quintian subjected her to cruel tortures. Agatha was ridiculed, whipped, bound to a tree and flogged until blood flowed. After that, the judge again tried to persuade her to deny Christ and to avoid any further torture and suffering. To that the bride of Christ replied: "These tortures are very beneficial for me; just as wheat cannot arrive at the granary before it is

cleansed from the chaff, so my soul cannot enter into Paradise if my body, beforehand, is not humbled by tortures." Then, the torturer ordered that her breasts be cut off and that she be cast into prison. St. Peter appeared to Agatha in prison and restored her to health and wholeness of body. Again, Agatha was led out for torture and again, cast into prison where she gave up her soul to God in the year 251 A.D. in the town of Catania during the reign of Emperor Decius. After her death, the torturer Quintian departed for Palermo to usurp her estate. However, along the way, his horse and the horses of his soldiers became wild with rage. Quintian was bitten on the face, thrown to the ground and trampled to death. Swift was the punishment of God that reached out for this savage crime perpetrated against St. Agatha.

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR AGATHA

*Kontakion*

Let the Church be

arrayed today in glorious

purple dyed with the

chaste blood of the

Martyr Agatha, and let it

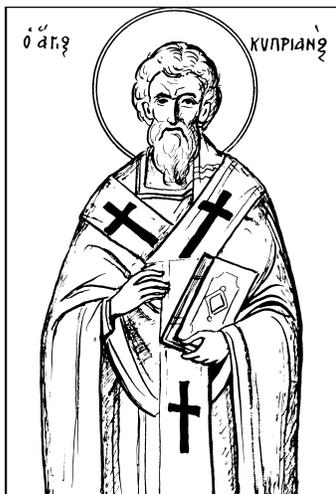
THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR AGATHA

cry: Rejoice, thou boast

of Catania.

# The Priestly-Martyr Cyprian Of Carthage

August 31<sup>st</sup>



Cyprian was born of unbelieving parents and himself was educated in polytheism. He became famous in Carthage as a teacher of philosophy and rhetoric. He was married but when he became a Christian, he ceased to live with his wife and dedicated himself to laborious study of Holy Scripture day and night and perfected his character. Because of his unusual virtues, he was chosen as a presbyter and soon after that as a bishop. As much as he was merciful toward Christians, so was he firm toward Christians. He wrote many works of instruction guided by the Holy Spirit. Especially, vehemently wrote against idolatry, Judaism and the Novatian heresy. Beautiful and sweet is his work concerning virginity, as well as of martyrdom and about charity, about patience, the Lord's Prayer and so forth. He suffered and died at the time of Valerian and Galian in the year 258 A.D. Before his death, he prayed to God, blessed the people and left twenty-five gold coins to be given to the executioner who would behead him. The unattainable greatness and generosity of a true Christian!

THE PRIESTLY-MARTYR CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

*Troparion*

Guide of Orthodoxy,

teacher of piety and

holiness, luminary of

Carthage, God-inspired

adornment of confessors,

○ Wise Cyprian, by thy

THE PRIESTLY-MARTYR CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

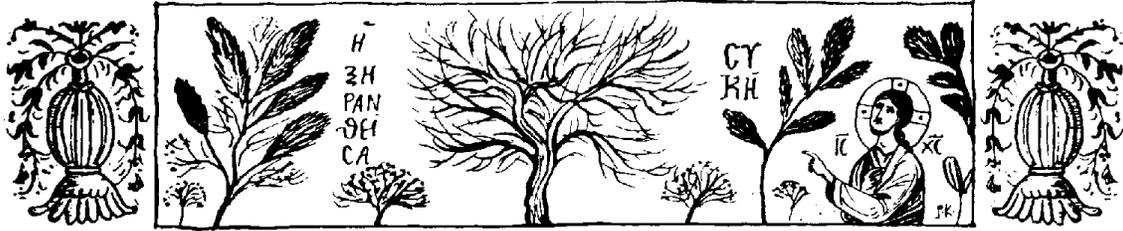
teachings thou hast

enlightened all, O harp of

the Spirit. Intercede

with Christ God that

our souls be saved.



## *The Holy Martyrs Lawrence And Sixtus, Pope Of Rome, And Others With Them*

*August 10<sup>th</sup>*

When Pope Stephen was slain (August 2), then St. Sixtus, who was an Athenian by birth, was appointed in his place. At first, Sixtus was a philosopher and, after that, a Christian. At that time, the Bishops of Rome were slain one after the other, so that, to become Bishop of Rome meant to be taken out to death. Emperor Decius was determined to destroy Christianity and Pope Sixtus was quickly brought to trial with two of his deacons, Felicitus and Agapitus. As they were led to prison, Lawrence said to the pope: "Where are you going Father, without your son? Where O bishop, without your Archdeacon?" The pope consoled him, prophesying to Lawrence that he will undergo even greater tortures for Christ and that he [Lawrence] will shortly follow him [Sixtus]. And indeed, as soon as they had beheaded Sixtus and his two deacons, Lawrence was apprehended. Beforehand, Lawrence had placed all of his affairs and the affairs of the church in order. As treasurer and Oikonomos [steward] of the church, he removed all of the church's valuables to the home of the widower, Cyriacus. On that occasion, he healed Cyriacus of a terrible head pain by the touch of his hand and restored the sight of a blind man, Crescention. Thrown into prison, even there Lawrence healed Lucillus, a prisoner of many years, of blindness and after that baptized him. Witnessing this Hippolytus, the jailer, was also baptized, and later suffered for Christ (August 13). Since Lawrence did not want to deny Christ but, on the contrary, advised Emperor Decius to reject his false gods, he was beaten on the face with stones and beaten on his entire body with a scorpion [a whip, curved at the end like the tail of a scorpion] i.e., by a chain with sharp teeth. Romanus, a soldier present at the torture, believed in Christ and was immediately beheaded. Finally, they placed Lawrence naked on a gridiron and lighted a fire. Roasting in the fire, St. Lawrence thanked God and mocked the emperor for his paganism. After Lawrence gave up his pure and heroic soul to God, his body was removed at night by Hippolytus and taken, at first, to the home of Cyriacus and afterwards to a cave where Hippolytus honorably buried him. St. Lawrence, with the others, suffered in the year 258 A.D.

THE HOLY MARTYRS LAWRENCE AND SIXTUS

*Kontakion*

A flame in thy heart.

○ Laurence, with the

fire divine, thou

burntest way the fire of

passions utterly. ○ firm

THE HOLY MARTYRS LAWRENCE AND SIXTUS

staff of athletes, O

thou God-bearing

Martyr; and thou in

truth while contesting

didst cry with faith.

THE HOLY MARTYRS LAWRENCE AND SIXTUS

Nothing shall separate

me from the love of

Christ.



## *The Holy Martyr Nicephorus*

*February 9<sup>th</sup>*

The biography of this martyr Nicephorus clearly demonstrates how God rejects pride and crowns humility and love with glory. There lived in Antioch two close friends, the learned priest Sapricius and the simple ordinary citizen Nicephorus. Somehow, their friendship turned into a terrible hatred for each other. The God-fearing Nicephorus attempted on many occasions to make peace with the priest. However, at no time did Sapricius desire to be reconciled. When the persecution of Christians began, the presbyter Sapricius was condemned to death and brought to the place of execution. The sorrowful Nicephorus followed after Sapricius beseeching him along the way to, at least, forgive him before his death that they might depart in peace.

"I beseech you, O martyr of Christ," said Nicephorus, "forgive me if I have sinned against you!" Sapricius did not even want to look at his opponent but quietly and arrogantly walked toward his death. Upon seeing the hardness of the priest's heart, God did not want to accept the sacrifice of his martyrdom and to crown him with a wreath but He mysteriously withheld His grace. At the last moment, Sapricius denied Christ and declared before the executioners that he would bow down before the idols. So it is with blind hatred! Nicephorus implored Sapricius not to deny Christ saying: "O my beloved brother, do not do that; do not deny our Lord Jesus Christ; do not forfeit the heavenly wreath!" But, all was in vain. Sapricius remained adamant. Then, Nicephorus cried out to the executioners: "I, also, am a Christian; behead me in place of Sapricius!" The executioners informed the judge of this and he ordered the release of Sapricius and, in his place, beheaded Nicephorus. Nicephorus joyfully lowered his head on the block and was beheaded. Thus, he was made worthy of the kingdom and was crowned with the immortal wreath of glory. This occurred in the year 260 A.D. during the reign of Gallienus.

THE HOLY MARTYR NICEPHORUS

*Troparion*

Love for the Creator

enlightened thy soul

enabling thee to fulfill

the law of grace, O

Nicephorus. Thou didst

THE HOLY MARTYR NICEPHORUS

love thy neighbour as

thyself, win the contest,

and destroy the serpent.

Wherefore ever preserve

us in peace.



*The Hieromartyr Dionysius,  
Bishop Of Alexandria  
October 5<sup>th</sup>*

Dionysius was born in Alexandria of eminent pagan parents. He was educated in Greek philosophy, and then studied with Origen. As a young man, he read the epistles of the Apostle Paul, came to believe in Christ and was baptized by Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria. In the year 247, Dionysius became Bishop of Alexandria, and served God and God's people as a true shepherd under very difficult circumstances. Externally, the Church was persecuted by pagans, while from within it was rent by heretics. In addition, a plague decimated the population for several years. Dionysius lived, hidden by the faithful, outside Alexandria for three years so as not to be slain before his time. During those three years, he wrote many epistles and other compositions to his flock, instructing and encouraging them to uphold Orthodoxy. Among his writings are several canons that the Church adopted. His epistle against Novatian is also considered a canonical writing. He governed the Church for seventeen years, and reposed in the year 265.

THE HIEROMARTYR DIONYSIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA

*Troparion Of The Martyrs*

Thy Martyrs, O Lord, in

their courageous contest

for Thee received as the

prize the crowns of

incorruption and life

THE HIEROMARTYR DIONYSIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA

from Thee, our immortal

God. For since they

possessed Thy strength,

they cast down the

Tyrants and wholly

THE HIEROMARTYR DIONYSIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA

destroyed the demons'

strengthless presumption.

O Christ God, by their

prayers, save our souls,

since Thou art merciful.

# St. Gregory The Wonderworker, Bishop Of Neocaesarea

November 17<sup>th</sup>



This man of God and powerful wonderworker was called a second Moses. Gregory was born of pagan, but eminent and wealthy, parents. He studied Hellenic and Egyptian philosophy and became aware of the meagerness and insufficiency of pagan philosophy. He then turned to Christian teachers, particularly Origen of Alexandria, with whom he studied for several years and from whom he received baptism. Pure in body and soul, he wanted to dedicate himself solely to Christ God, for which reason he withdrew to the wilderness where he spent much time in rigorous asceticism. His fame spread everywhere. Bishop Phaedimus of Amasea wanted to consecrate him Bishop of Neocaesarea. The clairvoyant Gregory perceived Phaedimus' intention and hid from the bishop's emissaries in the wilderness. Finally, Phaedimus

consecrated him in a strange way, and Gregory had to accept the office of bishop. The Most-holy Theotokos and St. John the Theologian appeared to him in a vision, and St. John, at the command of the Theotokos, gave him the Symbol of Faith that is known by Gregory's name. Who can enumerate all the miracles of this second Moses? He had power over evil spirits, and over mountains and waters, healed every pain and infirmity, could become invisible to his persecutors, and clairvoyantly perceived distant events and men's thoughts. He ended his earthly life in the year 270, in great old age. When he arrived in Neocaesarea as bishop, he found only seventeen Christians in that pagan city. When he departed this life, he left the city Christian, with only seventeen pagans, and received the wreath of glory from his Lord in the Heavenly Kingdom.

SAINT GREGORY THE WONDERWORKER

*Kontakion*

Since thou hadst received

the power to work

miracles, thou drovest

from men diseases, O

wise Gregory, and with

SAINT GREGORY THE WONDERWORKER

fearful signs thou

madest the demons

tremble; hence, thou art

called Wonderworker,

O man of God, for thou

SAINT GREGORY THE WONDERWORKER

has received thy

surname from thy works.

# Holy Saint Macrina The Elder

May 30<sup>th</sup>



Macrina was the grandmother of St. Basil the Great. She was wonderful in mind and in her piety. She was a disciple of St. Gregory Neo-Caesarea the miracle worker. During the reign of Diocletian, Macrina abandoned her home and, with her husband Basil, hid themselves in the forests and wilderness. Their property was confiscated but they did not grieve over it. Deprived of everything except their love for God, they settled in a primeval forest where they spent seven years. By God's providence, goats descended from the mountains and offered themselves to them and so they were nourished. They both died peacefully in the fourth century following great suffering for the Faith of Christ.

HOLY SAINT MACRINA THE ELDER

*Troparion Of The Righteous Martyrs*

O God of our Fathers,

ever dealing with us

according to Thy

gentleness: take not Thy

mercy from us, but by

HOLY SAINT MACRINA THE ELDER

their entreaties guide our

life in peace.

# The Holy Martyrs Cosmas And Damian Of Rome

July 1<sup>st</sup>



Cosmas and Damian were unmercenary physicians and miracle-workers. These two saints were brothers, were born in Rome and as children were baptized and brought up in the Christian spirit. They possessed abundant grace from God to heal men and livestock from every disease and suffering, usually by the laying on of hands. They sought no reward for their efforts. They only required of the infirm to believe in Christ the Lord. Inheriting a large estate, they charitably distributed it to the needy and to those in want. At that time, Emperor Galerius reigned in Rome. As a persecutor of Christianity, he summoned these two holy brothers before him shackled in chains. After a prolonged interrogation the emperor ordered them to deny Christ and to offer sacrifices to the idols. Cosmas and Damian not only did not heed the emperor but also counseled him to abandon the

dead idols and to recognize the One True God. "Our God is not created but He is the Creator of all, but your gods are the imaginations of man and the work of the hands of artists. If you did not have artists to make your gods, you would have no one to worship." After working a miracle upon the emperor himself-for they miraculously cured him from a grave infirmity - the emperor proclaimed his faith in Christ and released the holy brothers in peace. Cosmas and Damian continued to glorify God and to heal the sick and were themselves, glorified by the people on all sides. Envious of their glory, a certain doctor who, at one time was their teacher, and with the pretext to gather healing herbs, led them into the mountain and stoned them to death. They suffered honorably for the Faith of Christ in the year 284 A.D. Their memory remains eternal in the Church on earth and their souls took up habitation in the Kingdom of the Lord to live eternally in glory and in joy.

THE HOLY MARTYRS COSMAS AND DAMIAN OF ROME

*Troparion*

○ holy and unmercenary

wonderworkers, visit our

infirmities. Freely you

have received, freely give

to us.

# The Holy Martyrs Chrysanthus And Daria And The Others With Them

March 19<sup>th</sup>



Chrysanthus was the only son of Polemius, a distinguished patrician, who settled in Rome from Alexandria. As the son of wealthy parents, Chrysanthus studied all the secular subjects, having the most learned men for instructors. But secular wisdom confused him and left him in uncertainty as to what is truth. As a result of this, he grieved. But God, who plans all and everything, alleviated his grief. A written copy of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles came into the hands of the young Chrysanthus. Having read them, Chrysanthus was enlightened with the truth, and he desired a teacher and found one in the person of a certain priest, Carpophorus, who taught and baptized him. This did not please his father, who attempted everything in order to dissuade him from believing in Christ.

Not succeeding, the wicked father at first tried to corrupt him by placing him alone with an immoral woman. In this, Chrysanthus was victorious over himself and persevered in chastity. His father then coerced him into marrying Daria, a pagan girl. Chrysanthus counseled Daria to embrace the Faith in Christ and to live together as brother and sister, although pretending to be married. When his father died, Chrysanthus began to confess Christ openly and to live as a Christian, both he and his entire household. During the reign of Emperor Numerian, he and Daria were cruelly tortured for their faith. Even the torturer Claudius, witnessing the forbearance of these honorable martyrs and the miracles which were manifested during their agony, embraced the Faith of Christ along with his entire household. For this, Claudius was drowned. Both of his sons were beheaded. His wife, after having recited her prayers, died on the gallows. Daria was so steadfast in her agony that the pagans cried out, "Daria is a goddess!" Finally, it was decreed that Chrysanthus and Daria be buried in a deep pit and covered with stones. Later, a church was erected on this site. There was a cave near this pit where some Christians assembled for prayer and Communion in memory of the Saints Chrysanthus and Daria. Hearing of this, the pagans attacked and sealed off this cave. By such a death, the pagans drove these Christians from this world to a better world where Christ reigns eternally. These glorious martyrs, Chrysanthus and Daria and the others with them, among whom were Diodorus the priest and Marianus the deacon, suffered for Christ in Rome in the year 284 A.D..

THE HOLY MARTYRS CHRYSANTHUS AND DARIA

*Kontakion*

○ Chrysanthus, in the

sweet fragrance of

holiness thou didst draw

Daria to saving

knowledge. Together in

THE HOLY MARTYRS CHRYSANTHUS AND DARIA

contest you routed the

serpent, the author of all

evil, and were worthily

taken up to the heavenly

realms.

# The Hieromartyr Zenobius

## And His Sister Zenobia

October 30<sup>th</sup>



They were from the town of Aegea in Cilicia. They inherited the true Faith and great material wealth from their parents. Working zealously for the Faith and with great love, they distributed all their wealth to the poor. Because their hands were so generous, the hand of God shielded them from every evil intent of men and demons. The generous hands of Zenobius, which gave to the poor, were endowed by God with the gift of miracle-working, and Zenobius healed the sick of every kind of infirmity merely by touching them. Zenobius was appointed Bishop of Aegea. During a persecution, the Prefect Lysias arrested him and said: "I offer you two choices: life or death; life if you worship the gods, or death if you do not." St. Zenobius replied: "Life without Christ is not life but death, whereas death for the sake of Christ is not death but life." When Zenobius was subjected to cruel

tortures, Zenobia came to the judge and said: "I also want to drink from this cup of suffering, and be crowned with that wreath." After being tortured in fire and in boiling pitch, both were beheaded with the sword in about the year 285. Thus this brother and sister took up their habitation in the Kingdom of the Immortal Christ the King.

THE HIEROMARTYR ZENOBIUS AND HIS SISTER ZENOBIA

*Kontakion*

With songs inspired by

God, let us now render

honour, as is due, unto

Zenobius and wise Zenobia,

the pair of siblings in the

THE HIEROMARTYR ZENOBIUS AND HIS SISTER ZENOBIA

flesh, who proclaimed true

religion; those two

Martyrs of truth, who

passing their lives as one,

also received together

THE HIEROMARTYR ZENOBIUS AND HIS SISTER ZENOBIA

through martyrdom

crowns that shall not

fade.

# The Holy Female Martyr Marina

July 17<sup>th</sup>



Marina was born in Pisidian, Antioch of pagan parents. At the age of twelve Marina learned about the Lord Jesus Christ; how He became incarnate of the All-Pure Virgin, how He worked many miracles, how He suffered death on the Cross and gloriously resurrected. Her young heart became inflamed with love for the Lord and she vowed that she would never marry and further desired in her soul to suffer for Christ and to be baptized in the blood of martyrdom. Her father hated her because of her faith and did not consider her as his daughter. The imperial deputy Olymbrius, learning from Marina that she was a Christian, first wished that she would become his wife. When Marina rejected that he ordered her to bow down before the idols and to that St. Marina

replied: "I will not bow down nor offer sacrifice to the breathless and dead idols who do not recognize themselves nor do they know that we honor or dishonor them. I will not give them that honor which belongs only to my Creator." Then Olymbrius subjected Marina to harsh torture and threw her into prison completely covered with wounds and blood. While in prison Marina prayed to God and, after prayer, the devil appeared to her under the guise of a horrible serpent which entwined itself around her head. When she made the sign of the cross the serpent burst and vanished. Then she was engulfed with a heavenly light and it seemed to her that the walls of the prison vanished together with the roof and a radiant and towering cross appeared and atop the cross a white dove, from which a voice came saying: "Rejoice Marina, rational [discerning] dove of Christ, daughter of Zion in the highest, for your day of rejoicing has arrived." Marina was healed from all her wounds and pains by the power of God. The demented judge tortured her the following day, both in fire and in water, but Marina endured all as though she were in another body. Finally he condemned her to be beheaded. Before her death the Lord Jesus appeared to her with angels. She was beheaded during the reign of Diocletian but in soul and power she remained alive in the heavens and on earth. A hand of St. Marina reposes in the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mt. Athos. However, atop Mt. Langa in Albania overlooking Lake Ohrid, there is a monastery dedicated to St. Marina with a portion of her miraculous relics. Countless miracles have occurred and still occur in this monastery, whose witnesses are not only Christians but many Muslims as well. So much did the Turks have respect for this holy place that they never dared disturb either this holy place or the property of this monastery. At one time a Turk was the guardian of the monastery.

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR MARINA

*Kontakion*

Adorned with the beauty

of virginity, thou hast

been crowned with

unfading wreaths, O

Marina. Having shed thy

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR MARINA

blood in holy martyrdom

and radiant with miracles

of healing, thou hast

received the prize of

victory from the hand of

THE HOLY FEMALE MARTYR MARINA

thy Creator.

# The Holy Martyr Thalelaeus

May 20<sup>th</sup>



Thalelaeus was born in Lebanon. His father was called Berucius and his mother was called Romila. Thalelaeus was an eighteen-year old youth, handsome of countenance, physically tall and with reddish yellow hair. He was a physician by profession. He suffered for Christ during the reign of Numerian. When he bravely confessed his faith in Christ the Lord before his tormenting judge, the judge ordered the two executioners, Alexander and Asterius, to bore through his knees with a drill, to thread a rope through the perforated bones and to hang him from a tree. But God through an invisible power, took away the sight of the executioners. In place of Thalelaeus they bored through a board and hung it from a tree. When the judge-torturer found out, he thought that the executioners did this intentionally and ordered them

both to be flogged. Then Alexander and Asterius, in the midst of their flogging, cried out: "The Lord is alive to us and, from now on, we are also becoming Christians. We believe in Christ and suffer for Him." Upon hearing this, the judge-torturer ordered that both be beheaded. Then the judge took the drill to bore the knees of Thalelaeus himself but his hands became paralyzed and he begged Thalelaeus to save him, which the innocent martyr of Christ did, with the help of prayer. Following that, Thalelaeus was thrown into water but appeared alive before his tormentor (for Thalelaeus prayed to God inwardly to prolong his sufferings that he not die immediately). When he was thrown before wild beasts, they licked his feet and were amiable toward him. Finally, Thalelaeus was beheaded and took up his habitation in life eternal in the year 284 A.D.

THE HOLY MARTYR THALELAEUS

*Kontakion*

Thou wast a fellow

athlete with the

martyrs, O Thallelaeos,

and didst become a

soldier of the King of

THE HOLY MARTYR THALELAEUS

Glory. Thou dost

trample on the idolator's

pride through thy trials

and torments. Wherefore

we praise thy memory.



*The Holy Martyr Theodotus  
And The Seven Maiden Martyrs: Thecusa, Alexandra,  
Claudia, Falina, Euphrasia, Matrona And Julia  
May 18<sup>th</sup>*

Theodotus was married and an innkeeper in Ancyra during the reign of Diocletian. Although married, he lived according to the word of the apostle: *"Let those having wives act as not having them"* (1 Corinthians 7:29). He maintained the inn in order to unsuspectedly help Christians. His inn was a shelter of the persecuted faithful. Theodotus secretly sent help to those Christians who fled to the mountains and secretly gathered the bodies of those who died and buried them. At that time, seven maidens were brought to trial and tortured for Christ, ridiculed and finally drowned in a lake. One of them, St. Thecusa appeared in a dream to Theodotus and told to him to remove their bodies from the lake and bury them. In the darkness of night, Theodotus, with a companion, went out to fulfill the wish of the martyr and, led by an angel of God, succeeded to locate all seven bodies and bury them. But this companion betrayed Theodotus to the judge and the judge subjected him to cruel tortures. Theodotus endured all sufferings as though he were in someone else's body keeping his whole mind engrossed in the Lord. When the torturer transformed his entire body into wounds and knocked out his teeth with a stone, he ordered him to be beheaded. When he was led to the scaffold, many Christians wept for him and St. Theodotus said to them: "Brethren, do not weep for me but glorify our Lord Jesus Christ Who helped me to complete this mortification and to overcome my enemy." Having said this, he placed his head on the block under the sword and was beheaded in the year 303 A.D. A priest honorably buried this martyr's body on a hill outside the town. Later on, a church was built on this spot in the name of St. Theodotus.

THE HOLY MARTYR THEODOTUS

*Kontakion*

Having come from

various cities, O holy

ones, you proved to be

citizens of the Heavenly

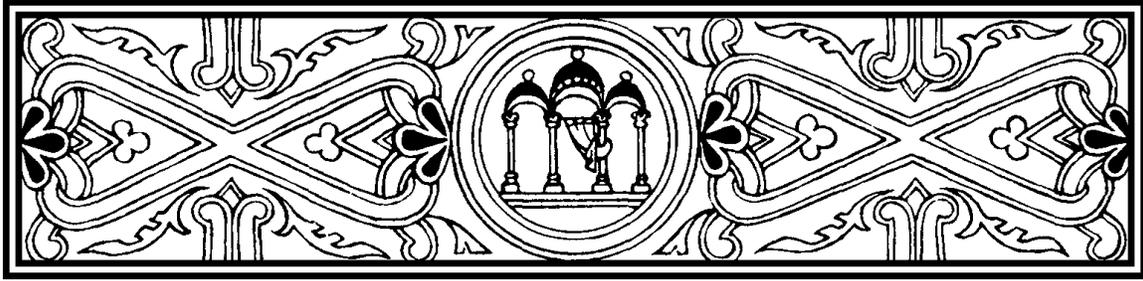
City. As divine Martyrs

THE HOLY MARTYR THEODOTUS

you formed an illustrious

choir, you champions of

the Trinity.



## *The Holy Martyr Julitta And Her Son, Cyriacus*

*July 15<sup>th</sup>*

Saint Julitta was of noble birth. She was widowed at an early age with her newborn child Cyriacus. She lived in Iconium in the town of Lycaonia and was completely devoted to the Faith of Christ. She immediately baptized her son after his birth and when he was three years old instructed him in the Faith and taught him to pray as much as a child of that age was capable. When Diocletian decreed the persecution of the Christians in the town of Iconium, much innocent blood was shed. Julitta took her son and hid from the wrath of the heathen in the city of Seleucid. It was not any better there. Julitta was arrested and, as a Christian, was brought before the judge. Since Julitta courageously confessed her faith in the Lord Jesus, the judge, in order to make her feel sorrow and cause her to waver, took the child in his arms and began to caress him. Cyriacus cried out loudly: "I am a Christian, release me to my mother!" Cyriacus turning his face away from the judge began to scratch him with his hands. The judge became so enraged that he hurled the child to the ground and pushed him with his feet. The child slid along the stone stairs and gave up his holy and innocent soul to God. Seeing how Cyriacus suffered before her eyes, St. Julitta was joyful and gave thanks to God because He made her son worthy of the martyr's wreath. After much suffering, Julitta was beheaded in the year 304 A.D. The relics of Saints Cyriacus and Julitta, even today, are miracle working. Part of the relics of these saints is to be found in Ohrid in the hospital chapel of the Holy Birth-giver of God.

THE HOLY MARTYR JULITTA AND HER SON CYRIACUS

*Kontakion*

As the Martyrs of

Christ God, the chaste

Julitta, in her arms bare

Cyricus, she cried out in

the stadium with manful

THE HOLY MARTYR JULITTA AND HER SON CYRIACUS

courage and boundless

joy: Thou art the

strength of the Martyrs,

O Christ my God.



## *The Holy Martyrs Adrian And Natalia*

*August 26<sup>th</sup>*

Adrian and Natalia were husband and wife, both of noble and wealthy families from Nicomedia. Adrian was the head of the Praetorium and a pagan and Natalia was secretly a Christian. Both were young and lived together in marriage for only thirteen months until martyrdom. When the nefarious Emperor Maximian visited Nicomedia, he ordered that Christians be seized and subjected to torture. In a cave near the city, twenty-three Christians were hidden. Someone reported them to the authorities and they were cruelly flogged with oxen whips and rods and then cast into prison. After that they were taken out of prison and brought before the Praetor to register their names. Adrian observed these people, tortured but patient, serene and meek and he made them swear to tell him what they expect from their God for so many tortures endured? They spoke to him concerning the blessedness of the righteous in the Kingdom of God. Hearing this and, again observing these people, Adrian, at once, turned to the scribe and said to him: "Write down my name with these saints, I also am a Christian." When the emperor learned of this, he asked Adrian: "Have you gone out of your mind?" To that Adrian replied: "I have not gone out of my mind but rather I came to my senses." Learning of this, Natalia greatly rejoiced and when Adrian, with the others, sat chained in prison, she came and administered to all of them. When they flogged and tortured her husband with various tortures, Natalia encouraged him to endure to the end. After lengthy tortures and imprisonment, the emperor ordered that an anvil be brought to prison and their legs and hands be broken with a hammer. This was carried out and Adrian, with twenty-three honorably men, gave up the spirit under the greatest of tortures. Natalia took their relics to Constantinople and honorably buried them there. After a few days, Adrian appeared to her all in light and beauty and called her, that, she also come to God and she peacefully gave up her spirit to God.

THE HOLY MARTYRS AIDRIAN AND NATALIA

*Kontakion*

The memory of the

Martyrs has dawned, and

all the ends of the world

are radiant. They cry out

with gladness: O Christ,

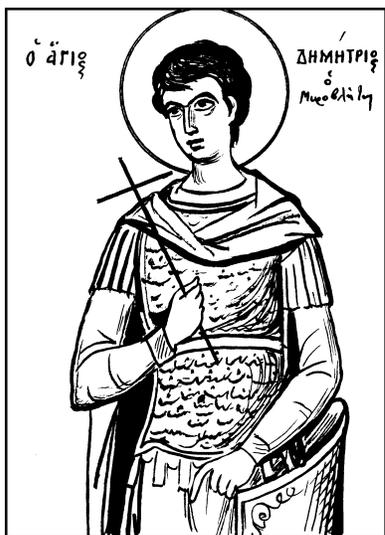
THE HOLY MARTYRS AIDRIAN AND NATALIA

Thou art the joy of the

martyrs.

# The Holy And Great Martyr Demetrius

October 26<sup>th</sup>



This glorious and wonderworking saint was born in Thessalonica of noble and devout parents. Implored of God by childless parents, Demetrius was their only son, and so was raised and educated with great care. Demetrius' father was a commander in Thessalonica. When his father died, Emperor Maximian appointed Demetrius as commander in his place. As he appointed him, Maximian, an opponent of Christ, particularly recommended that he persecute and exterminate all Christians in Thessalonica. Demetrius not only disobeyed the emperor but openly confessed and preached the Lord Jesus Christ in the city of Thessalonica. When the emperor heard of this he became furious with Demetrius. Then, when he was returning from battle against the Sarmatians, Maximian stopped at Thessalonica to investigate the matter. The emperor summoned Demetrius and questioned him about his faith. Demetrius openly acknowledged his Christian Faith to the emperor and also denounced the emperor's idolatry. Maximian cast Demetrius into prison. Knowing what was awaiting him, Demetrius gave all his goods to his faithful servant Lupus to distribute to the poor, and joyfully awaited his imminent suffering for Christ the Lord. An angel of God appeared to him in prison saying: "Peace be to you, O sufferer of Christ; be brave and be strong!" After several days, the emperor sent soldiers to the prison to kill Demetrius. The soldiers found the saint of God at prayer and ran him through with lances. Christians secretly took his body and honorably buried it. Healing myrrh flowed from the body of the martyr of Christ, curing many of the sick. Soon, a small church was built over his relics.

Ann Illyrian nobleman, Leontius, was afflicted with an incurable illness. He hastened, with prayer, to the relics of St. Demetrius and was completely healed. In thanksgiving, Leontius erected a much larger church on the site of the old church. The saint appeared to him on two occasions. When Emperor Justinian wanted to translate the relics of the saint from Thessalonica to Constantinople, flaming sparks sprang from the tomb and a voice was heard: "Stop, and do not touch!" And thus, the relics of St. Demetrius have remained for all time in Thessalonica. As a protector of Thessalonica, St. Demetrius has appeared many times, and on many occasions has saved Thessalonica from great calamity. His miracles are without number. The Russians considered St. Demetrius to be the protector of Siberia, which was conquered and annexed to Russia on October 26, 1581.

THE HOLY AND GREAT MARTYR DEMETRIUS

*Kontakion*

God has give thee

invincible strength, O

Demetrius, and hast

tinged the Church with

thy blood and kept thy

THE HOLY AND GREAT MARTYR DEMETRIUS

city un-harmed, for thou

art its foundation.



## *The Holy Martyr Nestor*

*October 27th*

In the time of the suffering of St. Demetrius the Myrrh-gusher, there was a young man of Thessalonica, Nestor, who learned the Christian Faith from St. Demetrius himself. At that time Christ's enemy, Emperor Maximian, organized various games and amusements for the people. The emperor's favorite in these games was a Vandal by the name of Lyaeus, a man of Goliath-like size and strength. As the emperor's gladiator, Lyaeus, challenged men every day to single combat and slew them. Thus, the bloodthirsty Lyaeus amused the bloodthirsty, idolatrous Maximian. The emperor built a special stage for Lyaeus' battles, similar to the threshing floor on pillars. Spears, points upward, were planted beneath this platform. When Lyaeus defeated someone in wrestling, he would throw him from the platform onto the forest of spears. The emperor and his pagan subjects cheered as some poor wretch writhed in torment on the spears until he died. Among Lyaeus' innocent victims were many Christians: when no one volunteered to duel with Lyaeus, by the emperor's orders Christians were arrested and forced to duel with him. Seeing this horrifying amusement of the pagan world, Nestor's heart was torn with pain, and he decided to come forward for a duel with the gigantic Lyaeus. But first, he went to prison to see St. Demetrius and sought a blessing from him to do this. St. Demetrius blessed him, signed him with the sign of the Cross on the forehead and on the chest and prophesied to him: "You will defeat Lyaeus, but you will suffer for Christ." Thus, young Nestor went to duel with Lyaeus. Maximian was present with a multitude of people; everyone felt pity for the young Nestor, who would surely die, and tried to dissuade him from dueling with Lyaeus. Nestor crossed himself and said: "O God of Demetrius, help me!" and with God's help, he overcame Lyaeus, knocked him down, and threw him onto the sharp spears, where the heavy giant soon found death. Then all the people cried out: "Great is the God of Demetrius!" But the emperor, shamed before the people and sorrowing for his favorite Lyaeus, was greatly angered at Nestor and Demetrius, and commanded that Nestor be beheaded and Demetrius run through with lances. Thus, the Christian hero Nestor ended his earthly life and took up his habitation in the kingdom of his Lord in the year 306.

THE HOLY MARTYR NESTOR

*Troparion*

As friend and companion

of Demetrius thou wast

an invincible athlete of

godliness. By divine help

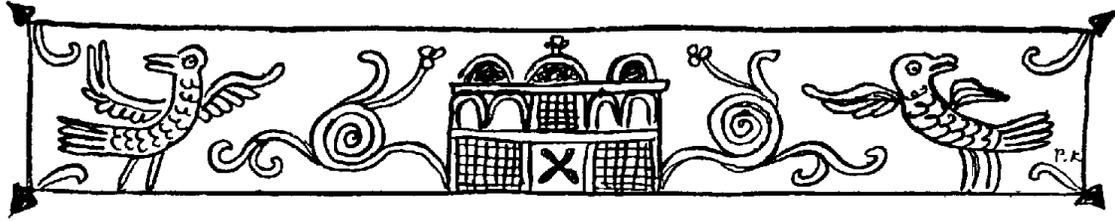
thou didst conquer Lycios.

THE HOLY MARTYR NESTOR

and in being slain became

a holy sacrifice to

Christ.



## *The Holy Martyr Lupus*

*August 23<sup>rd</sup>*

This holy man Lupus was a servant of St. Demetrius the commander of Thessalonica. When Emperor Maximian beheaded St. Demetrius, Lupus dipped the hem of his garment and his ring in the blood of the martyr. With this garment and ring, Lupus worked many miracles in Thessalonica, healing people of every pain and infirmity. Emperor Maximian, who was then still residing in Thessalonica, discovered this and ordered that Lupus be tortured and killed. However, the soldiers who took up weapons against Lupus turned against one another and severely wounded themselves. As he was not yet baptized, even though he was a Christian, Lupus prayed to God that He would somehow plan his baptism before his death. At that moment, rain unexpectedly fell from the clouds upon this holy martyr and thus he received baptism from on high. After great sufferings, Lupus was beheaded and took up habitation in the Kingdom of Heaven.

THE HOLY MARTYR LUPUS

*Troparion*

Thou wast armed with

the invincible power of

God the Word, ☉

prizewinning Martyr

Lupus, thou didst war

THE HOLY MARTYR LUPUS

against the prince of evil

and shine resplendently

in contest, and receive

the prize of victory.

Pray for us fervently

THE HOLY MARTYR LUPUS

that we may be granted

the forgiveness of our

sins.

# The Holy And Great Martyr Barbara

December 4<sup>th</sup>



This glorious follower of Christ was betrothed to Christ from early childhood. Her father Dioscorus was a pagan and was renowned for his position and wealth in the city of Heliopolis in Egypt. Dioscorus locked up his only daughter Barbara, brilliant in mind and of beautiful countenance, in a high tower. He surrounded her with every comfort, gave her female servants, erected idols for worship, and built her a bathing room with two windows. Looking through the window at the earth below and the starry heavens above, Barbara's mind was opened by the grace of God. She recognized the One True God, the Creator, despite the fact that she did not have a human teacher to bring her to this knowledge. Once,

while her father was away from the city, she came down from the tower and, according to God's providence, met some Christian women who revealed the true Faith of Christ to her. Barbara's heart became inflamed with love for Christ the Lord. She ordered that a third window be cut open in the bath so that the three windows would represent the Holy Trinity. On one wall she traced a Cross with her finger, and the Cross etched itself deep in the stone as if cut by a chisel. A pool of water sprang forth from her footprints on the floor of the bath, which later gave healing of diseases to many. Learning of his daughter's faith, Dioscorus beat her severely and drove her from the tower. He pursued her in order to kill her, but a cliff opened up and hid Barbara from her brutal father. When she appeared again, her father brought her to Martianus, the magistrate, who handed her over for torture. They stripped the innocent Barbara and flogged her until her entire body was covered with blood and wounds, but the Lord Himself appeared to her in prison with His angels and healed her. A certain woman, Juliana, upon seeing this, desired martyrdom for herself. Both women were severely tortured and with mockery were led through the city. Their breasts were cut off and much blood flowed from them. They were finally led to the place of execution, where Dioscorus himself slaughtered his daughter, and Juliana was slain by the soldiers. That same day, lightning struck the house of Dioscorus, killing him and Martianus. St. Barbara suffered in the year 306. Her miracle-working relics rest in Kiev. Glorified in the Kingdom of Christ, she has appeared many times even in our own day, sometimes alone and sometimes in the company of the Most-holy Theotokos.

THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR BARBARA

*Troparion*

Let us honour Saint

Barbara, for she hath

broken the snares of the

enemy; and like a sparrow,

she, the all-modest

THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR BARBARA

maiden, was delivered out

of them by the help and

weapon of the Cross.

# The Holy And Great Martyr Catherine

November 24<sup>th</sup>



Catherine was the daughter of King Constus. After the death of her father, she lived with her mother in Alexandria. Her mother was secretly a Christian who, through her spiritual father, brought Catherine to the Christian Faith. In a vision, St. Catherine received a ring from the Lord Jesus Himself as a sign of her betrothal to Him. This ring remains on her finger even today. Catherine was greatly gifted by God and was well educated in Greek philosophy, medicine, rhetoric and logic. In addition to that, she was of unusual physical beauty. When the iniquitous Emperor Maxentius offered sacrifices to the idols and ordered others to do the same, Catherine boldly confronted the emperor and denounced his idolatrous errors. The emperor, seeing that she was greater than he in wisdom and knowledge, summoned fifty of his wisest men to debate with her on matters of faith and to put her to shame. Catherine outwitted and shamed them. In a rage, the emperor ordered all fifty of those men burned. By St. Catherine's prayers, all fifty confessed the name of Christ and declared themselves Christians before their execution. After Catherine had been put in prison, she converted the emperor's commander, Porphyrius, and two hundred soldiers to the true Faith, as well as Empress Augusta-Vasilissa herself. They all suffered for Christ. During the torture of St. Catherine, an angel of God came to her and destroyed the wheel on which the holy virgin was being tortured. Afterward, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself appeared to her and comforted her. After many tortures, Catherine was beheaded at the age of eighteen, on November 24, 310. Milk, instead of blood, flowed from her body. Her miracle-working relics repose on Mount Sinai.

THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR CATHERINE

*Troparion*

Let us praise the all-lauded

and noble bride of Christ,

the godly Catherine, the

guardian of Sinai and its

defence who is also our

THE HOLY MARTYR CATHERINE

support and succour and

our help; for with the Holy

Spirit's sword she hath

silenced brilliantly the

clever among the godless.

THE HOLY MARTYR CATHERINE

and being crowned as a

Martyr, she now doth

ask great mercy for us all.

# The Venerable Female-Martyr Febronia [Fevronia]

June 25<sup>th</sup>



Febronia was the daughter of Prosporus, a senator from Rome. In order to avoid marriage with a mortal man, Febronia betrothed herself to Christ and was tonsured a nun in the east, in the country of Assyria, in a convent where her aunt Bryaena was abbess. Lysimachus, the son of a nobleman, desired to wed Febronia but since Emperor Diocletian suspected him to be a secret Christian, he sent Lysimachus to the east with his uncle Silenus to apprehend and kill Christians. Silenus was as cruel as a beast and exterminated Christians everywhere without mercy. Lysimachus, on the contrary, spared the Christians wherever he could and hid them from his beast-like uncle. Making Palmyra a wasteland of Christians, Silenus came to the town of Nisibis close to which was a convent with fifty ascetics among whom was Febronia. Even though she was only twenty years old, Febronia was respected in the

convent and in the town because of her great meekness, wisdom and restraint. In this convent the rule of the former abbess Blessed Platonida was adhered to in that every Friday be spent only in prayer and the reading of the sacred books without any other type of work. Bryaena had designated Febronia to read the sacred books to the sisters hidden behind a curtain so that no one would be distracted and captivated by the beauty of her face. Hearing about Febronia, Silenus ordered that Febronia be brought to him. But, when the holy virgin refused to deny Christ and to agree to enter into marriage with a mortal man, Silenus ordered her to be whipped, and after that to knock out her teeth, cut off her hands, breasts then legs and finally to slay her with a sword. However, a horrible punishment from God befell the torturer the same day. A rage entered into him and he was overcome by a deadly horror. In this horror he struck his head against a marble pillar and fell dead. Lysimachus ordered that Febronia's body be gathered and brought to the convent where it was honorably buried and he, with many other soldiers, were baptized. Many healings have occurred from the relics of St. Febronia and she appeared on the day of her feast and stood in her usual place among the sisters and all the sisters looked upon her with fear and rejoicing. St. Febronia suffered and took up habitation in eternal blessedness in the year 310 A.D. In the year 363 A.D., her relics were translated to Constantinople.

THE HOLY MARTYR FEBRONIA

*Kontakion*

In ascetic discipline, thou

wast made fair as a

virgin; then, O famed

Febronia, thou shonest

forth as a martyr; with

THE HOLY MARTYR FEBRONIA

thy lamp in hand, thou

rannest unto thy

Bridegroom, having

watched throughout the

night of martyr's

## THE HOLY MARTYR FEBRONIA

sufferings. And since

thou art crowned in glory,

thou intercedest for them

that praise thee with

faith.



## *The Priestly-Martyr Clement, Bishop Of Ancyra*

*January 23<sup>rd</sup>*

Clement was born in the year 258 A.D. in the city of Ancyra of a pagan father and a Christian mother. His devout mother Euphrosyne prophesied that her son would die a martyr's death and then she departed this world when Clement was twelve years old. Her friend Sophia took Clement to her home as a son and assisted in rearing him in the Christian spirit. Clement was so famous because of his virtuous living that he was elected bishop of Ancyra at the age of twenty. In his young years, he attained the wisdom of a mature adult, and by great restraint he tamed and conquered his body. Clement fed on bread and vegetables only and did not eat anything butchered or bloody. During the reign of Diocletian, he was tortured so horribly "as no one ever, since the beginning of the world." He spent twenty-eight years in difficulties and in dungeons. Eleven different torturers tormented and tortured him. At one time, when they struck him in the face, spat upon him and broke his teeth, he cried out to Domentian, his torturer: "You do me great honor, O Domentian, for you are not torturing me, because even the mouth of my Lord Jesus Christ was also beaten and struck in the face and behold, I, the unworthy, now became worthy of that!" When Clement was brought to Rome before Emperor Diocletian, the emperor placed various weapons on one side for torture and on the other side gifts, such as decorations [medals], clothing and money; all that the emperor could bestow, and then he told Clement to choose. The martyr of Christ glanced with scorn at all the emperor's gifts and chose the instruments of torture. Clement was indescribably tortured: piece by piece they removed the flesh from his body so that the white bones showed beneath the flesh. Finally, he was beheaded by a soldier in Ancyra while, as bishop, he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy in church in the year 312 A.D. The miracles of St. Clement are without number.

THE HIEROMARTYR CLEMENT, BISHOP OF ANCYRA

*Kontakion*

Thou wast a precious

branch of Christ the

Vine, O much-suffering

and all-famed Clement,

and with thy fellow-

THE HIEROMARTYR CLEMENT, BISHOP OF ANCYRA

sufferers thou didst cry:

Thou, O Christ, art the

radiant joy of the

martyrs.

# *Saint Constantine The Great And His Holy Mother Helena*

*May 21<sup>st</sup>*



Constantine's parents were Emperor Constantius Chlorus and the Empress Helena. Chlorus had other children by another wife, but from Helena he had only Constantine. After his coronation Constantine fought three great battles: one, against Maxentius, a Roman tyrant; the second, against the Scythians on the Danube and the third, against the Byzantines. Before the battle with Maxentius, while Constantine was greatly concerned and in doubt about his success, a brilliant Cross appeared to him in the sky during the day, completely adorned with stars and written on the Cross were these words: "By this Sign Conquer." Astonished, the emperor ordered a large cross to be forged similar to the one that appeared to him and that it be carried before the army. By the power of the Cross he achieved a glorious victory over the enemy who was superior in numbers.

Maxentius was drowned in the Tiber river. Immediately after that, Constantine issued the famous Edict of Milan in the year 313 A.D. to halt the persecution of Christians. Defeating the Byzantines, Constantine built a beautiful capital on the Bosphorus which from that time on was called Constantinople. Before that, however, Constantine succumbed to the dreaded disease of leprosy. As a cure, the pagan priests and physicians counseled him to bathe in the blood of slaughtered children. However, he rejected that. Then the Apostles Peter and Paul appeared to him and told him to seek out Bishop Sylvester who will cure him of this dreaded disease. The bishop instructed him in the Christian Faith, baptized him and the disease of leprosy vanished from the emperor's body. When a discord began in the Church because of the mutinous heretic Arius, the emperor convened the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, 325. A.D., where the heresy was condemned and Orthodoxy confirmed. St. Helena, the pious mother of the emperor, was very zealous for the Faith of Christ. She visited Jerusalem, discovered the Honorable Cross of the Lord, built the Church of the Resurrection on Golgotha and many other churches throughout the Holy Land. This holy woman presented herself to the Lord in her eightieth year in 327 A.D. Emperor Constantine outlived his mother by ten years. He died in Nicomedia in his sixty-fifth year in 337 A.D. His body was interred in the Church of the Twelve Apostles in Constantinople.

SAINT CONSTANTINE THE GREAT AND HIS HOLY MOTHER HELENA

*Troparion*

○ Lord, Thy disciple

Emperor Constantine,

who saw in the sky the

Sign of Thy Cross,

accepted the call that

SAINT CONSTANTINE THE GREAT AND HIS HOLY MOTHER HELENA

came straight from Thee.

as it happened to Paul,

and not from any man. He

built his capital and

entrusted it to Thy care.

SAINT CONSTANTINE THE GREAT AND HIS HOLY MOTHER HELENA

Preserve our country in

everlasting peace, through

the intercession of the

Mother of God, for Thou

art the Lover of mankind.

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